Screening the Man: Masculinities and Australian Adaptations 1975- 2015

By

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Declaration

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for a degree or a diploma by the University of Tasmania or any other institution, except by way of background information which is duly acknowledged in the thesis, and to the best of my knowledge and belief it includes or contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due acknowledgement is made in the text of the thesis.

William Simon

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Acknowledgements

It seems appropriate that I have written a thesis about the performance of masculinity in Australian films and television programs, as they have been my constant companions since arriving in Australia in 1974 from Cyprus as a fourteen-year-old with little English. Indeed, I learned English as much at school, as I did from Australian movies and television shows such as *No 96*; although my Year 8 English teacher had a hard time trying to explain to me the malapropisms of Dorrie Evans, such as "I prefer to remain ambiguous." Who would have thought that in 1975 this hapless fictional character would presage the thinking that dominated Queer Studies in the 1990s?

A lot has changed in the ensuing forty years, which is the timeframe I examine in my thesis. The last four decades have witnessed the growth of adaptation and gender studies and have problematized so many aspects of Australian life including seeing men as constructed gendered subjects. Jack Thompson in 1975 may have been the embodiment of desirable and hardened working-class masculinity in *Sunday Too Far Away* but by 2015 he had become an overweight, dipsomaniacal and oppressive patriarchal figure in *Ruben Guthrie*.

Long before she agreed to be my supervisor, Imelda Whelehan's work in adaptation studies had a profound impact on my work as a high school teacher and sparked a lifelong interest in the process of adaptation. Imelda has been a thoughtful and tireless supervisor. I am grateful for her constant vigilance that has helped me to complete this thesis, despite my propensity to dive into so many rabbit holes. I am also extremely thankful to Kristyn Harman, who also supervised my work, offering invaluable guidance and support during this scholarly journey. The judicious criticism and insightful

observations made by both Imelda and Kris have had a positive impact on the development of my thesis.

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I am particularly thankful to my partner, Ross Murdoch, whose unfailing and level-headed practical support has enabled me to complete this work. I dedicate this thesis to him.

Referencing and formatting throughout this thesis follow the guidelines stipulated by MLA, 8th edition – published in May 2016.

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Abstract

This thesis examines the enactment of masculinities in Australian screen adaptations between 1975 and 2015. Since 81% of 362 screen adaptations produced in Australia during these four decades[1] focus on the lives of men, I consider masculinity to be inseparable from Australian identity. The timeframe of forty years scrutinised in this thesis also coincides with the growth of Masculinity and Gender Studies as academic disciplines. The last four decades have also, serendipitously, witnessed the establishment and growth of Adaptation Studies as an interdisciplinary academic focus.

This thesis analyses how representations of masculinities over forty years simultaneously adhere to and challenge the relational concept of hegemonic masculinities. The argument in this thesis is informed by an interdisciplinary approach in my methodology and my interpellation as a qualitative researcher. As part of this, I have observed a number of interpretive and qualitative perspectives including cultural studies, adaptation theory, postcolonialism, social constructionism, film theory, poststructuralism, queer theory as well as gender and masculinity studies. Data management methods and close textual analysis were my main methods of making sense of my findings as part of my research process.

My thesis argues that there exists an abhorrence of hegemonic masculinities within the Australian cultural and political context in favour of the exhortation of a working-class 'battler' masculinity that has its roots in the mythopoetic Outback tradition. My research of Australian screen adaptations, within a forty-year period, has affirmed the changing nature of enactments of non-hegemonic masculinities within a relational theoretical framework. I have identified evidence pointing to the dismantling of patriarchal structures and signs of the gradual ascendancy of inclusive masculinities.

[1] My compilation of this list is included in Appendix 1.

The representation of masculinity in Australian screen adaptation texts is at the core of my thesis because this is an area that has received little scholarly scrutiny. What will be explored throughout the work is the intangible nature of hegemonic supremacy; its changeability, as well as its relational nature according to prevailing cultural and social mores. Venerated masculinity in Australia is androcentric, white, English-speaking and stands as the binary opposite of the feminized 'other'. Particularly, I will be arguing that in the Australian context, the quest for acceptance and legitimization in the homosocial zone of men does not align with the domain of the rich and powerful hegemons but instead is to be found within the averageness of working-class masculinity, which enjoys such an exalted status in Australia that it is indeed conjoined with national identity.

I will be exploring this in three distinct sections in the thesis.

Firstly, through the mostly commonly venerated archetypes of Australian masculinity: the larrikin, the mate and the ANZAC warrior. I will demonstrate how all three idealised embodiments of masculinity can be challenged and that desiring to belong to these three idealised ranks does not confer a commensurate hegemonic dividend on its aspirants.

The next section of my work explores the juxtaposition between city and bush living and argues that defiant masculinity becomes a refuge for disenfranchised men. This section also illustrates the pervasive threat of ostracism from a tiered patriarchal order confronting such men.

The final section of my work deals with the aforementioned associative stigmatization and oppression of those who fail to measure up to preconceived notions of how masculinity ought to be enacted, including homosexuals, Aboriginal Australians and ethnically-diverse men from non-Anglo-Celtic backgrounds.

Table of Contents

Illustrations

"If only you could see what I've seen with your eyes!"[1]

Introduction

This thesis argues that, through the prism of adaptation studies, the traditional configuration of masculinities is contested in the Australian context. In its place, within the impulse of egalitarianism, a working-class battler identity that has its roots in the mythopoetic Outback tradition becomes the centralising and idealised enactment of being a man in the company of other men.

This thesis examines the enactment of masculinities in Australian screen adaptations in the period between 1975 and 2015 and speculates how this colludes with, extends, complements, and/or challenges the relational concept of hegemonic masculinities. In developing this argument, I firstly investigate how socially condoned forms of masculinities have evolved in Australia in these forty years, as evidenced through the adaptation process. Secondly, I explore whether a culturally-specific form of desirable masculinity can be located within the Australian context, and finally I analyse whether there has been a shift in the way cultural representations of masculinity are depicted,

[1] From *Blade Runner* directed by Ridley Scott and adapted from the novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* by Phillip K. Dick. Spoken by the replicant Roy Batty to scientist Hannibal Chew who had manufactured Batty's eyes.

appreciated and valued. I also consider what this shift may be a symptom of in contemporary Australian culture.

This Introduction consists of four sections: a synoptic overview of my thesis, a summative appraisal of significant research that has informed my work, a reflective section outlining my interdisciplinary methodology and, finally, an outline of the chapters that follow. My thesis can be located at the crossroads of different disciplines that include adaptation theory and studies, film theory, Australian literature, gender and masculinities studies, cultural studies, and sociology.

Australian adaptations, like all forms of cultural representation, can be seen as complicit in perpetuating commonly-held assumptions about enactments of masculinity entrenched within patriarchal notions of power and privilege. Australian screen adaptations locate such performative acts of masculinity within a normative context, condone a hegemonic construction of masculinity and disseminate these through cinematic and television language that can be understood as 'natural'. They achieve this by the use of naturalism and in doing so reify one of the major advantages of the adaptation process; they disseminate concrete visual images to audiences of how men interact with others through the multimodal elements afforded by film and television language. Screen adaptations, in their totality, also provide compelling evidence to audiences of the nexus between national Australian identity and images of men. This collocation becomes central to my overarching claim in this thesis, that Australian consciousness itself is framed around a masculine identity. Three key questions became the catalysts for my work:

1) can a 'socially-condoned' form of masculinity be evidenced through the adaptation

process?

2) can a culturally-specific form of desirable masculinity be located within the Australian context and if so, how does this form of esteemed masculinity differ from other theoretical models and other cultures?

3) has there been a discernible shift over the years in the way cultural representations of masculinity are depicted, appreciated and valued?

As part of this introductory section, I first include some observations about the privileging of masculine narratives in Australian screen adaptations and explore some critical thinking about the nature of gender, patriarchal power and how gender traditionally was a term reserved for women, leaving men as an ungendered subject (Acker 565). Australian screen adaptations, like most forms of cultural representation, perpetuate commonly-held assumptions about enactments of masculinity within patriarchal notions of power and privilege as proposed by Michael Kimmell in *The History of Men: Essays in the History of American and British Masculinities* (2005). Most Australian adaptations examined for this thesis appear to conform to hegemonic power structures pivoting on notions of cultural homogeneity and favouring the perspectives of white, Anglo-Celtic males. The evidence for this argument will unfold through detailed critical analyses of particular texts. Pre-1975 screen adaptations are largely beyond the purview of this work, although some are mentioned due to their continuing cultural significance.

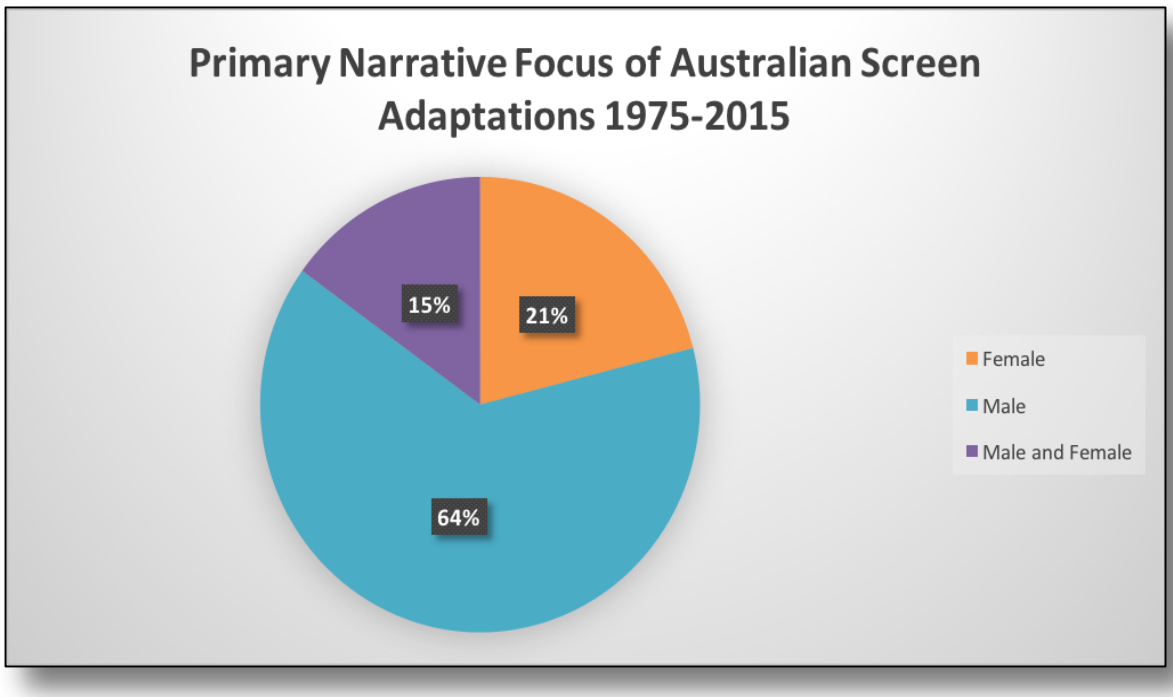

Fig 1 illustrates how the composition of most screen adaptations has been predominantly a male domain in Australia.

I would first like to consider the privileging of masculine narratives in Australian screen adaptations that (con)fuse male and Australian identity, as Fig. 1 illustrates. These figures, interspersed throughout the thesis, were systematically constructed following my examination of 362 Australian screen adaptations. Of particular interest is whether the multifaceted adaptation process itself obfuscates, illuminates and/or amplifies traits of Australian masculinity.

In his book *The Australian Legend* (1958), Russel Ward attempts to define Australian identity exclusively in male terms:

> a practical man, rough and ready in his manners and quick to decry any appearance of affectation in others… Though capable of great exertion in an emergency, he normally feels no impulse to work hard without good cause. He swears hard and consistently, gambles heavily and often, and drinks deeply on

> occasion… he is a great knocker of eminent people unless, as is in the case of his sporting heroes, they are distinguished by physical prowess. He is fiercely independent… above all he will stick to his mates through thick and thin, even if he thinks they may be wrong… He tends to be a rolling stone, highly suspect if he should chance to gather much moss. (16–17)

Ward's effusive celebration of men as the 'real Australians' is not too egregious considering the number of Australian screen adaptations that focus primarily on the lives of men as shown by Fig. 2. As early as 1930, Henry Mackenzie Green in *A History of*

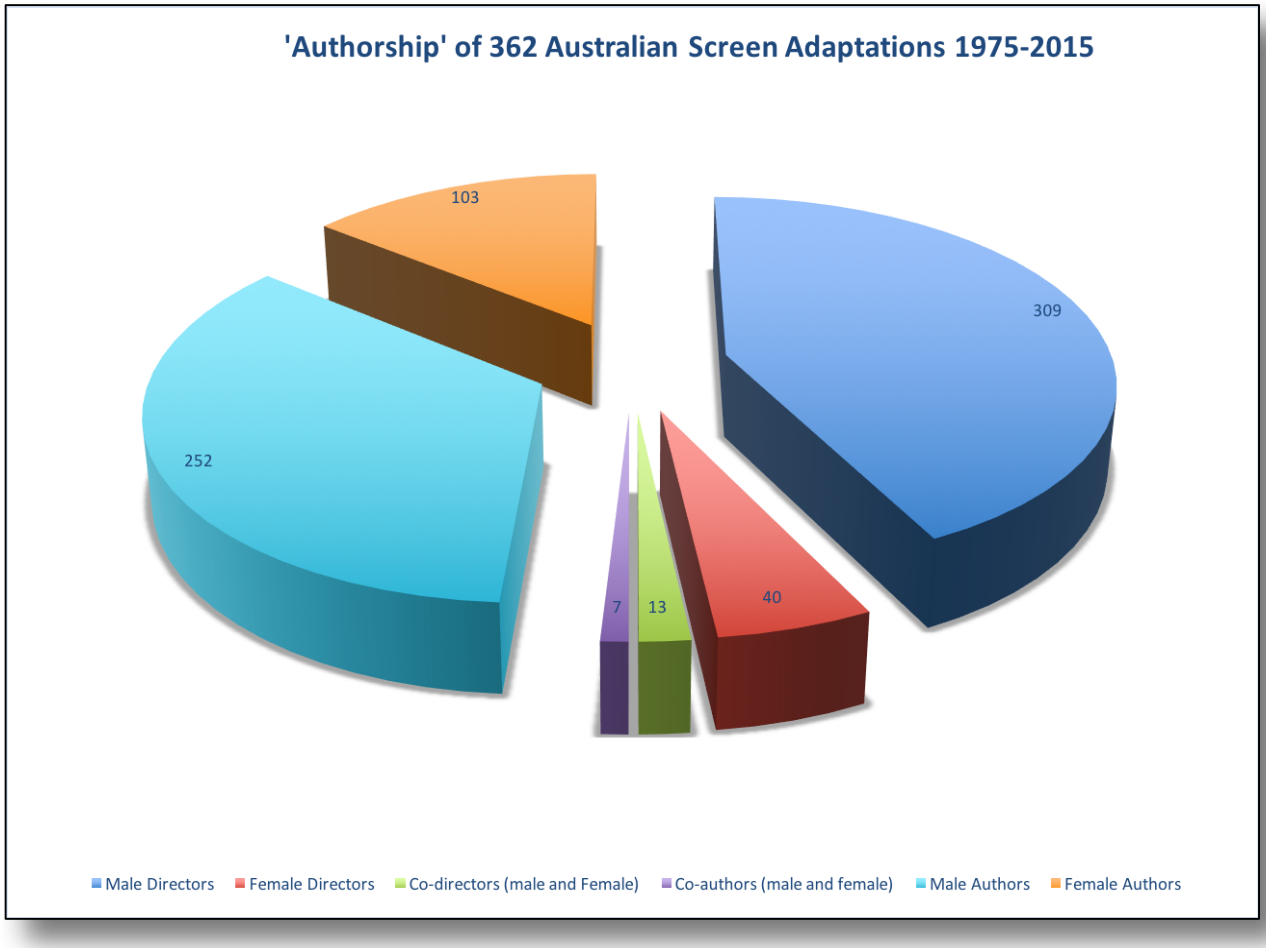

Fig 2. illustrates how the composition of most screen adaptations has been predominantly a male domain in Australia.

Australian Literature (1961) identified several archetypal characteristics of Australian identity, particularly Australian masculinity, that included: independence of spirit, a kind of humorous disillusionment, a slightly sardonic good nature and a certain underlying hardness of texture (Pierce "Cambridge" 5). Australian cinematic history would add the attributes of ruggedness, loyalty, and courage to Green's archetypes.

There are multiple examples of these masculine traits in Australian cinema. Such traits are encapsulated by the idealised figure of Logan Marriott in the film adaptation of *Careful, He Might Hear You* (1983), directed by Carl Schultz, to cite an illustrative example.[2] The film pares down the episodic nature of the novel and communicates the drama of a young boy's quest for maturity. As part of his development, the boy must reject the oppressive world of the feminine realm (represented principally by the character Aunt Vanessa) and embrace the masculine world, as typified by both his working-class Uncle George and his father, the laconic Marriott. Such working-class battler archetypes of Australian masculinities like George and Marriott, and others including the bushman in *The Shiralee* (1987), the ocker in *Crocodile Dundee* (1986), the mate in *Breaker Morant* (1980) and the 'battler' in *The Harp in the South* (1986) "all struggle across geographical and socio-political landscapes redolent of colonialism and its legacies" (Lucas 138) and collectively, reinforce the notion that the 'working-class battler' figure is both prolific in screen adaptations and enjoys such an unprecedented status in Australian culture that it is inseparable from postcolonial Australian identity. In fact, the axiomatic position reserved for this type of masculinity, distinguishes it as hegemonic, as I argue consistently throughout this thesis.

[2] According to MLA 8 conventions, characters in the adaptation intertexts scrutinised are referred to by their full name when first mentioned and subsequently by their surname, where one exists.

The socio-cultural forces that privilege patriarchy, homosociality and – principally – mateship are a further means in understanding how Australian identity and masculinity are intertwined and communicated in milestone Australian adaptations. Stuart Hall, in *Cultural Identity and Diaspora* (1990), proposes that "identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past" (226). In this way, we can perceive ourselves in terms of a number of parallel and, at times, oppositional identities. Louis Althusser's concept of interpellation is an important consideration when analysing the dissemination of ideology. He claims that individuals are positioned by social and political institutions as subjects and are not necessarily people with self-produced individualistic identities. Althusser further argues that "all ideology hails or interpellates concrete individuals as concrete subjects" (11). The accumulation of stories of white, heterosexual Protestant males in so many Australian adaptation intertexts has resulted in the privileging of a certain type of national identity that reflects the experiences and desires of such men and excludes the discussion of how others, including women, gays, migrants and indigenous Australians, can contest their own Australianness.

A further conflation of masculinity and Australian identity can be observed through the figure of the soldier which adds to this focus on nation. National groups such as soldiers, need to be understood as behaving in 'respectable' ways, that is, working tirelessly to maintain the national ethos. The character of Joe Harman, played by Bryan Brown, in the television miniseries *A Town Like Alice* (1981) illustrates this point. When we first encounter him, he is a patriotic and laconic soldier in Malaya who, at great personal sacrifice, saves a number of women and children at a prison camp. As a result, he is tortured and, one presumes, left to die. By his actions, Harman demonstrates national

values such as sacrifice, bravery, and a 'fair go'. Despite the stoicism with which Brown endows the character of Harman, both adaptation intertexts reiterate how the character is connected to the spirit of the bush, particularly the Outback town of Willstown, where Harman was born and where he works as a farmer. It can be argued that the explicit and confronting torture Harman endures, in both the novel and its adaptation, are an echo of the Biblical crucifixion, transforming the humble working-class digger into a selfless and sacrificial Christ-like figure.

The privileging of masculine narratives in Australian screen adaptations is enabled by the naturalist acting mode that is employed by most Australian screen texts and because of this, one discerns in many screen adaptations a notion of a civilised society in Australia that has entrenched social inequity. Naturalism is the dominant type of acting employed in commercial Hollywood films as well as Australian film productions and this style of acting in films encourages audiences to look for recognisable aspects of human life (Glyn Davis et al 241). Susan Hayward sees naturalism as indivisible from realism and points out that naturalism invites the audience to assume the function of the mediating camera (253). In this way, what is enacted before audiences, including the pervasiveness of patriarchal power associated with gender performance, appears to be 'real' through the process of naturalizing, a process whereby "social, cultural and historical constructions are shown to be evidently natural" (Hayward 251). The *Red Dog* (2011) intertexts, for instance, can be used to illustrate how naturalism contributes to the success of the film hypertext. Here, by recalling the 1970s so vividly and nostalgically through all production elements of the film, the film version of the quaint animal tale of the original novella catapults the audience into a world that looks and sounds authentic. Tom O'Regan

agrees, observing that "naturalism as an ideological figure" influences the types of stories pertaining to Australian identity (204).

I argue in this thesis that, with a handful of exceptions, the naturalist dramatic mode has been the dominant form of screen adaptations in Australia since 1975 and the effect of this has been to naturalise the privileging of masculinist narratives, particularly narratives that condone the actions of white, heteronormative Anglo-Celtic men. Of all the films that have grossed more than fifteen million dollars at the Australian box-office since 1975[3], 78% of these can be considered adaptations, proving that as a film genre[4], adaptations are commercially viable ventures with wide audience appeal. Collectively, the nature of such screen texts, as commercial products, demands a considerable financial investment and must be palatable to the audience's perceptions and interests if they are to succeed financially and socially. All these adaptations use naturalism almost exclusively as a way of communicating their ideas. Even the two speculative films *Babe* (1995) and *Mad Max 2* (1981), rely on tropes associated with naturalism such as shooting on location (and not in the studio), the use of multi-camera point of view and the involvement of the audience by inviting them through editing to assume the position of the mediating camera. In this manner, naturalism can be seen as an ideological apparatus, conjoined with Australian postcolonial mythmaking.

Screen adaptations do not rely exclusively on the pre-established following of the original text to attract a potential audience; they must also find ways to resonate with new audiences as well. The cinematic transformation in 2011 of *Red Dog* by Kriv Stenders, on the other hand, has become a laconic paean to Australian masculinity, representing the

[3] See Appendix 2.
[4] As claimed by Thomas Leitch in "Adaptation, the Genre" (106).

titular animal through anthropomorphism as an archetypal larrikin: fiercely independent, loyal and resilient.[5] Such an interpellation may account for the achievement of *Red Dog* as the highest selling DVD of all time in Australia, suggesting that some enactments of masculinities resonate more strongly with consumers.[6] The recreation of the 1970s in *Red Dog*, particularly through costume, music, and dialogue, reiterates the importance of verisimilitude in social realist texts as a way of engaging audiences. This seamless representation of authentic life evades later gendered criticisms by eliciting them and through the evocation of nostalgia naturalises the performances of masculinity communicated in the film. Consequently, the values of the privileged elite in society – in the case of *Red Dog* the economic imperatives of the mining industry – become synonymous with common sense, remain unchallenged and are perpetuated.

The decade of the 1980s marked the beginning of scholarly examination of masculinity which, at the time, was perceived as an auxiliary of Gender Studies, and owed much to a feminist legacy. This decade was also an important one because, prior to this time, men were generally not perceived as 'gendered', but rather as unproblematic and highly privileged humans: Men were the normative from which women deviated. More importantly, being male was viewed as a 'natural state'; masculine behaviour was seen as the automatic consequence of inhabiting a male body. As numerous retroactive Australian adaptations such as *All the Rivers Run* (1993) and *My Brother Jack* (2001) can attest, masculinity is portrayed as inseparable from biological gender and the behaviour and attitudes of men can be justified discursively through biological construction.

[5] The novella *Red Dog* (2002), by Louis de Bernières, recounting the adventures of the Pilbara Wanderer, a much-loved canine in Outback Australia, was not the critical and economic juggernaut that his earlier work, *Captain's Corelli's Mandolin* (1994) was. The book, however, did enjoy modest success, particularly in Australia's secondary classrooms.

[6] Reported by Gian De Poloni for ABC News in 2014.

David Buchbinder argues that we cannot "construct our gender for ourselves; it is predetermined for us by a vast, complex and irresistible array of forces, pressures, and persuasions" (*Masculinities* 31). Accordingly, any discussion of a singular masculine ideology can be contested, even though most adaptations reviewed would reveal a prevalence of such archetypal male traits as stoicism, strength, and courage. But such traits, routinely ascribed to men, are not necessarily restricted to males, as the characters of Lucinda in *Oscar and Lucinda* (1997), Gail in *The Sapphires* (2012), and Robyn Davidson in *Tracks* (2013) illuminate. This conundrum, of whether masculinity can only be enacted by men, invites a further interrogation of the nature of gender, referencing the work of Judith Halberstam in *Female Masculinity* (1998) as well as Judith Butler. Butler's crucial work questions 'sensible' and 'natural' assumptions about the nature of sex, gender, and identity and proposes that there is, in fact, very little that is inherently natural about gender and suggests that people learn to perform an authorised code of gender which is espoused by socio-historical cultural forces:

> When the constructed status of gender is theorised as radically independent of sex, gender itself becomes a free-floating artifice, with the consequence that man and masculine might just as easily signify a female body as the male one, and woman and feminine a male body as easily a female one (6).

Similarly, Raewyn Connell in her 1995 book *Masculinities*, proposes that being masculine is intrinsically connected to a socio-historical and cultural context and that within the spectrum of masculinities one can locate different ways that men perform their perceived 'authorised' ways of being male. She contends that within any society some men are so marginalised by the dominant culture that they cannot aspire to the hegemonic status and the benefits that such a position affords. The character of Johnny,

played by Paul Capsis in *Head On* (1998), is one example that illustrates this assertion. Johnny can be seen as a subordinated man not only because of his ethnicity and cross-dressing but also because he openly contests the status of hegemonic masculinity that he finds oppressive. This will be further explored in Chapter 6.

I will now turn my attention to Australian male identity and its relation to gender. The proliferation of male voices in Australian adaptations reinforce the notion of masculinity as a normalised phenomenon or state of being. Warwick Mules asserts "masculinity need only affirm itself by negating the feminine" (202). As asserted by many commentators including Buchbinder, since the Enlightenment, in Western societies at least, masculinity appears to be synonymous with the public sphere (*Masculinities* 6) and is supported by material obstructions to women's participation in this sphere. This collocates with the depiction of men as initiators of action and subjects of the narrative journey in the greatest majority of Australian screen adaptations. In the hierarchical relationship between the two genders one can establish that the term man is privileged over the term woman. Even a very recent adaptation, such as the miniseries of *Puberty Blues* (2012-14), represents men as active and women as sexualised and passive, as part of its hankering for the past. This nostalgic impulse in the new text is what interpellates both women and men as traditional gendered subjects.

Sally Robinson observes that gender is routinely associated with the bodies of women (72). Before the decade of the 1960s, and in times of significant social upheaval, men, white men particularly, were 'unmarked' and masculinity was perceived as the 'natural' and normative state (10). Buchbinder adds that this process of making physical and visible what was once assumed to be the norm, also made masculinity vulnerable (20). As a recent adaptation, *Bastard Boys* (2007), can demonstrate, as a safeguard from challenges

to their power, men themselves have perpetuated the crisis in masculinity. Exclusion from the homosocial zone, or a perception of being less than a man, have resulted in a form of crisis for Australian men who fear ostracism and censure by other men. The constant drive to maintain a man's place in the homosocial order, as seen in such screen texts as *The Boys* (1998), *Blackrock* (1997), and *Australian Rules* (2002), results in the embracing of violence as a central component of Australian masculinity, which will be expounded in Chapter 5.

One needs to distinguish between a formal patriarchy, where the male power over his subjects is literal and absolute, and a contemporaneous understanding of a symbolic patriarchy, where men could enjoy the rewards of such an institution at many levels. Buchbinder, in his 2012 examination of emergent masculinities, suggests viewing such a symbolic patriarchy as "a discursive formation by means of which sex, sexuality and gender become intelligible and legible within a particular economy of power" (*Studying Men* 67). What this implies is that as a concept, the patriarchal order in Australian society can be viewed as fluid but advantageous to not only one gender (male) over another (female) but also one that distinguishes, and thereby privileges, some men over others based on their cultural, social, racial, ethnic, religious background, not to mention their sexual orientation. A conventional depiction of patriarchal order, as exercised at a socio-cultural level, is illustrated in the television adaptation of Ruth Park's much-loved work, *Harp in the South* and is satirised, with varying degrees of success, in the adaptation of the Frank Moorhouse novella, *The Ever-Lasting Secret Family* (1988) by the imposition of familial, and familiar, heteronormative structures onto a group of homosexuals.

Hegemonic masculinity is not a taxonomical term; rather, it refers to a set of idealised practices as enacted by different characters in the adaptations discussed in this thesis.

Such practices point to a normative understanding of the enactment of masculinity that requires men to acknowledge the power exercised by the privileged few. All enactments of hegemonic masculinity are organic and capable of being constantly revised according to changing mores, socio-cultural and economic conditions in a particular society. Essentially the character of The Drover in *Australia* (2008) ought to enjoy hegemonic power since he embodies all the exalted attributes of the larrikin and the bushman. He shares many of his character traits with another drover, Dan McAlpine, played by Chips Rafferty in the 1946 film *The Overlanders*, one of a number of hypotexts for Baz Luhrmann's film. Both characters are hard-working, stoic, physically imposing, laconic in their demeanour and mistrusting of authority; both men value freedom and justice. However, even though McAlpine is respectful towards Aboriginal people in the earlier film, there is no evidence that he views them as equals, as Luhrmann's Drover does. The latter married an Aboriginal woman and his brother-in-law, Magarri, is a trusted and loyal mate. As a result, the Drover's close identification with Aboriginal people precludes him from enjoying the economic privileges of patriarchy and the social privileges of hegemonic masculinity. The conflict between the Aboriginal and Anglo-Celtic characters captures the history of Australian colonial and postcolonial history according to Pam Cook (117) and aligns with the film's intent, which is to act as a healing text in Australia's cultural life and history. Certainly the slow-motion technique used prolifically in *Australia* is connected to the Aboriginal Dreamtime which is alluded to throughout the text.

Hegemony seeks to approbate the socially-condoned practices enjoyed by groups of men at particular historical junctures and, given that prevailing conditions fluctuate, so do idealised enactments of masculinity. This thesis examines the relevance and significance of Connell's social theory of hegemonic masculinities when applied to Australian screen

adaptations, composed twenty years before and twenty years after the publication of her work. By scrutinising hegemonic masculinities as expounded by Connell, and as responded to by others, I will examine whether a culturally-specific form of desirable masculinity can be located within the Australian context, and whether there has been a shift, in the last four decades, the way cultural representations of masculinity are understood, appreciated and valued.

Literature review

My argument in this thesis has been informed by the work of others in diverse, but interlocking, disciplines that include adaptation studies, gender theory, film theory, cultural studies, Australian literature and sociology.

The prism of adaptation studies

Of particular focus in this work is the examination of whether the multifaceted adaptation process itself obfuscates, illuminates and/or amplifies traits of Australian masculinity, both 'desirable' characteristics such as loyalty, stoicism, and strength, and 'undesirable' ones such as violence, homophobia, and racism. Also, I argue in this thesis that the verisimilitude associated with the social realist dramatic mode has resulted in the naturalization of certain kinds of enactments of masculinity, as communicated to audiences through the process of representation.

My earliest conscious encounter with adaptation was as a nine-year old in Cyprus in 1969 trying to make sense of the songs on the Official UK Top 40 Singles Chart, courtesy of the BBC. Even with my limited English at the time, "Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da" by The Beatles proved extremely difficult to understand, and as children do, I took liberty with

the transliteration of the actual words and I am now too ashamed to write what my own adaptation did to "Molly's face". As a twelve-year-old I began to read voraciously, both in Greek and in translation and *Μεγάλες Προσδοκίες*[7] and *Περηφάνια και Προκατάληψη*[8] became my all-time favourites. Being an active participant in the process of translation as well as being the beneficiary of the translation process has provided me with a solid appreciation that a precise and pure adaptation of one text into another can never exist. I was not conscious of this back then, but I was actually actively involved in what lies at the heart of adaptation studies: the process of cultural and textual intersection.

Even though adaptation studies continue to proliferate globally, very little has been written and discussed about screen adaptations of Australian texts. This thesis, therefore, intends to expand the conversation between Australian screen texts and adaptation studies, particularly in reference to more recent screen texts.

A definition of what constitutes an adaptation remains highly contested but most understand it to be the appropriation of meaning from an earlier text. Compounding the fluidity of the term is the fact that the word 'adaptation' refers both to the process and the end result (Hutcheon 15). Essentially, what attracts audiences to adapted stories is the re-articulation of a narrative. Sufficient changes can be made to a narrative trope to ensure that an audience continues to consume the newer version of a story with equal relish, as they had done with the earlier one. Minor differences, such as setting, do exist within the texts to whet the audience's appetite for what Linda Hutcheon refers to, in her influential book *A Theory of Adaptation* (2013), as "repetition without replication" (7). Kamilla Elliot in *Rethinking the Novel/film Debate* (2003) asserts that adaptation highlights

[7] Dicken's *Great Expectations.*
[8] It still astounds me that the Greek translation of Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* managed to retain the alliteration of the letter 'p' in its Greek adaptation!

the separation of form (expression) and content (ideas) which most readers and audiences would find contentious (133). Daniel Fischlin and Mark Fortier argue that, "adaptation includes almost any act of alteration performed upon specific cultural works of the past and dovetails with a general process of cultural recreation" (4). They quote the work of Ruby Cohn who contests that 'offshoots' is an apt way to describe the connection between two texts that share a recognisable relationship (3). Adaptation Studies, for me, do not take issue with the status of meritorious literary works or in any way seek to challenge authorship and originality. The taxonomies of adaptation texts are as prolific as the nature of the texts involved in the process of adaptation. Adaptations have been categorised as transliterations, parodies, homages, reworkings, imitations, transportations, abridgements, transformations, emendations, analogies, transformations, spinoffs, parasitisms and riffs. I use the term *adaptation intertexts* in my work to describe the relationship between two texts when this is dualistic or bimedial but I propose the term phylontexts to describe 'the friendly and familial' relationship between a group for texts that resonate within newer texts. For example, Baz Luhrmann's *Moulin Rouge* (2001) cannot be defined as an adaptation of a singular text but rather a melange of sources including *Orpheus and Eurydice*, *La Bohème*, the tropes of contemporary Bollywood cinema, popular music and the works of artists such as Hieronymous Bosch and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. Put simply, adaptation denotes a critical, organic, dynamic and authentic relationship between texts.

The fidelity debate remains a vexing factor in the adaptation process even though most scholars dismiss this as anachronistic. The fidelity of the newer text to the original source remains an object of fascination, however, for many journalists and film commentators. Christopher Orr has noted: "the concern with the fidelity of the adapted film in letter

and spirit to its literary source has unquestionably dominated the discourse on adaptation" (*Novel to Film* 73). I have deliberately not privileged literary hypotexts as the culturally-privileged "originals" in my scrutiny of Australian screen adaptations because it is the complexity that can be located in the actual process of adaptation that interests me the most. I continue to be enthralled with how one text from a particular socio-cultural context and particular form can be re-envisaged in another form, an act of "both inter-cultural and inter-temporal communication", as Susan Bassnet suggests (9). Imelda Whelehan suggests in "Adaptations: The Contemporary Dilemmas" that some of the practical realities involved in adapting a screen text include "pruning culturally anachronistic features and trimming sophisticated narrative strategies into a recognisable popular film genre" (4). What intrigues me is how changes in form can reveal different ideological agendas. I am cognisant that the construction of film is a collaborative effort, beyond the scope of a single 'authorly' effort and it is precisely these polyphonic constructions of the performance of masculinity which are at the heart of my work.

Robert Stam has written of the vampiric nature of adaptations in *Literature and Film: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Film Adaptation* (2005 8) but my own research has concluded that this problematized relationship between hypo/hypertext is more symbiotic than parasitic. Jill Jolliffe's *Cover-Up: The Inside Story of the Balibo Five* (2002) provides one such example. Following the release of the film, *Balibo* (2009) directed by Robert Connolly, she re-released her work using the name of the adapted text. Deborah Cartmell and Imelda Whelehan suggest in *Screen Adaptation: Impure Cinema* (2010) that much of the debate involving screen adaptations centred on whether or not the screen adaptation was worthy of the meritorious nature of the original text; often overlooking the fact that some of the original printed material that people were so passionate in

defending involved material that upon scrutiny was not so meritorious after all (3), or was no longer in publication. For example, the much loved 'nationalistic' film *Breaker Morant* (1980) directed by Bruce Beresford was adapted from a play by Kenneth Ross which has now been out of print for decades. Cartmell and Whelehan also note that readers entangled in the debate over fidelity and the axiomatic primacy of the literary text are often confused about differences in narrative exposition and characterisation in the two texts/mediums. In fact, in a non-declamatory medium such as film, the two become synonymous; the actions themselves are the only way to successfully convey character. What I have observed throughout my own research is that film needs to distil the narrative of the original source into one central idea that is carried through.

The work of Gérard Genette, particularly his complex understanding of adaptations as instances of transtextuality, has also been extremely useful in my work, particularly in my consideration of significant works such as *Australia* and *Animal Kingdom* (2010) which cannot be easily accommodated within taxonomical categories such as transpositions, commentaries, and analogies[9]. Genette asserts that transtextuality constitutes "all that sets the text in relationship, whether obvious or concealed, with other texts" (83). In *A Companion to Literature, Film, and Adaptation* (2012), Deborah Cartmell argues that the complex adaptation process is a positive cultural force and that it leads to a form of equalisation within society. I have been influenced by numerous intriguing aspects of the adaptation process but will restrict my discussion to only two. I am indebted to Linda Hutcheon for her explanation of palimpsestuous intertextuality (22) which I have used as a way of making meaning of the Opening Ceremony of the Sydney Olympics. Finally, Timothy Corrigan in *Film and Literature: An Introduction* (2012) identified a type of

[9] This is another contested aspect of adaptation studies but I have found the taxonomies of adaptations suggested by Geoffrey Wagner (222) useful.

emerging paratextuality in his speculation of the importance of referencing "an image bank" (xvi) and this was most useful for my consideration of Luhrmann's *Australia* (2008) as a digital palimpsest which relies on the signification of a myriad of images encountered in other texts to imbue it with polysemic significance.

Ultimately for me, the pleasure of the adaptation process is the ability to see both or all texts involved in the adaptation process in a textual continuum, and to reflect what aspects are both illuminated and obfuscated by this positioning of texts.

Gender and Masculinities Studies

My thesis was influenced greatly by the research of other academics and researchers in gender and masculinity studies. I do not explicitly address feminism in this thesis but suffice to say, this liberating paradigm has impacted on the development of masculinities, and on my own work, in a profound manner. The concept of interpellation as developed by Althusser has been influential in the work of feminist scholar and queer theorist Judith Butler. Her *Gender Trouble* (1990) is possibly the most influential book in gender studies particularly with regard to the performativity of gender and what she sees as the "compulsory practice of heterosexuality" (151). Butler claims that for a man to be understood and appreciated as such, he needs to call attention to himself as a man – an action called iteration (2). In this manner, men learn to enact an authorised form of masculinity which social and political institutions condone. Butler's framework of the social construction of gender identities, including femininity, masculinity and queer identity has been incredibly useful in my own research. Her original premise that "anticipation conjures its object" (xv) was ground-breaking in how we interpellate individuals as gendered citizens. In her analysis of the performativity of gender, Butler

also asserts "that the gendered body is performative suggests that it has no ontological status apart from various acts which constitute its reality" (185). Apart from physiognomy, which can be partly attributed to a genetic predisposition, everything else that denotes masculinity including words, gestures, stance, intonation, vocalics, kinesics and haptics, are socially invigilated and condoned in a homosocial order in Australia, through various institutions and apparatus, as Althusser would claim. The character of Scott Hasting in *Strictly Ballroom* (1992), for example, is interpellated as a son, rebel, loyal dancer, lover, mate, antagonist and visionary and his negotiation of these competing subject positionings is what provides the text with its panegyric ending.

Connell and James W. Messerschmidt (2005) emphasise that "masculinities are configurations of practice that are accomplished in social action and, therefore, can differ according to the gender relations in a particular social setting" (836). Thinking about hegemonic masculinities as a relational framework allows one to better appreciate both the plurality and the hierarchy of masculinities that can be discerned in Australian screen adaptations. Men, like farmer Hoggett in *Babe*, as master of hoof and beak, yield considerable patriarchal power but are not necessarily an embodiment of idealised masculinity. It is at the societal level that an idealised articulation of masculinity is constructed and disseminated, for example, through the pervasive figure of the larrikin and the Anzac hero, in a plethora of screen adaptations.[10] In such manifestations, hegemonic masculinity is disseminated as a revered form of a masculinity used to describe a relatively young white male, possibly from an Anglo-Celtic heritage, who is physical and hard-working either in the bush or the urban environment; a man who

[10] The word ANZAC is an acronym for Australian and New Zealand Army Corps but it is now used as both an adjective and proper noun and therefore does not need to be in capitals – please see www.awm.gov.au/commemoration/anzac-day/

wields considerable power in his socio-cultural context and who profits from such a rank.

As a way of participating meaningfully in society, men need to learn "the behaviour and manners, the gestures and attitudes that the culture deems appropriate" to the male gender (Buchbinder *Studying Men* 25). It is only by affirming and subscribing to sociocultural expectations that men can be understood as masculine or lay claim to the performance and behaviours endorsed by social and political apparatus. Michel Foucault maintained that power operates through social structures, an understanding which can then allow individuals to resist it. Foucault, in his discussion of power, moves away from observing it passively as oppressive but views it as productive, contributing to the establishment of identity, the creation of relationships, the demarcation of differences and the marking of social practices and behaviours. As postulated by Buchbinder, Foucauldian power "produces knowledge, and knowledge produces power: the two work in reciprocal and complementary ways" (*Studying Men* 40). Our identity as Australians is not formulated to a single strand such as gender but rather can be located at the confluence of various discursive strands such as age, gender, sexuality, class, race, religion and ethnicity. Foucault asserts that "where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power" (95). As part of this paradigm, power cannot be asserted if no resistance is offered to this power. Again, the character of The Drover in *Australia* can be used as an illustration. The very absence of a name for this character alerts audiences that Luhrmann is using him as an archetypal construct and recalls other such figures in Australia's film history and literary landscape. The Drover, as played by Hugh Jackman, enjoys considerable power due to his youth, physical prowess, agility and incontestable

skills in rural Australia in a society of men. His attractiveness and sexual cogency are irrefutable and yet the character refuses to exploit the advantageous notion of power that is available to him because he recognises how such an advantage in the hierarchy of his society disadvantages and marginalises others, particularly indigenous Australians. What the character of The Drover represents, in terms of larrikinism and inclusivity, will be further explored in Chapter 2.

Buchbinder in *Studying Men and Masculinities* comments on how the focus on masculinity, has made masculinity vulnerable (20) and that masking one's identity is a survival mechanism for men who are cognisant of what performances of masculinity are condoned by society at any given historical juncture. Candace West and Don H. Zimmerman assert that the construction of gender is not performed at the individual level but rather, revealed through interactions with others and before an audience of others. Such a view was formative in my appreciation of mateship in the Australian context.

The scientific work of Edward Wilson, according to Michael Kimmel, reiterates the dominance of male power in society. This is because Wilson has argued that behaviour in all animals, including humans, is foremost biological and not socially-determined; calling this biological imperative the "genetic leash" (*Consilience* 127). Wilson's scientific work strongly argues that there are indisputable limits as to how far a person can alter her/his social behaviour. Francesca Cancian in her 1987 work, *Love in America: Gender and Self-Development,* claims that the way gender roles are understood and disseminated in texts is a phenomenon that occurred amidst the dramatic social changes and upheavals in the 19th century. Instead of seeing the 'protean' trait of stoicism in men as a unique aspect of Australian colonial identity, as seen in screen adaptations like *For the Term of his Natural*

Life (1983), Eric Anderson attributes this phenomenon as evolving from the huge social changes in the 19th Century. Gargi Bhattacharyya in *Sexuality and Society* (2002) views the social and institutional apparatus, such as those first mentioned by Althusser, as central in the formation of gendered subjectivity. Stephen Rose, Leon Kamin and Richard Lewontin claim in their book, *Not in Our Genes: Biology, Ideology and Human Nature* (1984) that being born a man does not automatically clear a pathway to privilege and power.

Dean Lusher and Garry Robbins assert that viewing masculinities away from taxonomical categories but within a theoretical, organic relational allows audiences to see how it is other men who condone certain types of masculinity and excoriate others that approximate femininity. To me, this adheres to the panoptic notion of observation with the intent of imposing normalisation expounded by Foucault in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1995). He argues "on the whole, therefore, one can speak of the formation of a disciplinary society in this movement that stretches from the enclosed disciplines, a sort of social quarantine, to an indefinitely generalizable mechanism of panopticism" (126). The aforementioned observation by Lusher and Robbins is, however, very pertinent to my work because "the thousand eyes"[11] of the hegemonic order that invigilate the behaviour and enactment of masculinity do not belong to an uber-hegemon mythical creature but to a myriad of ordinary men and mates, whose complicitness in maintaining an economic and cultural status quo results in the continued marginalisation and oppression of women and other men who do not enact what is expected of them as "blokes" and "mates". Such ordinary men who supervise the performativity of gender in Australia are associated with the working-class battler identity that Christine Beasley isolates as a local sub-hegemonic, but simultaneously canonical,

[11] The Argus Panoptes was a giant in Greek mythology who used his one hundred eyes to approbate social order and behaviours in the city.

manifestation of national identity in *Mysterious Skin: Male Bodies in Contemporary Cinema* (2009). As illustrated by the screen adaptations I have examined in my research, the primacy of this working-class identity, which lies at the core of my thesis, may be seen as an equalising impulse within the economic-sociocultural and political life in Australia but is, in fact, used as a subterfuge for the financial and cultural interests of a tiny privileged minority.

Another important concept used in this work is homosociality. Eve Kosofky Sedgwick in *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Order* (1985) defines homosociality as a way of describing complex non-sexual social male bonds which can be enacted in society within the context of homophobia (1) and notes that the presence of women is often symbolically used to strengthen the bonds between men. Philip Butterss views homosociality in the Australian context as suffocating for men and a contributing factor to the enactment of protest masculinities (44).

Margaret Wetherell and Nigel Edley in *Men in Perspective: Practice, Power, and Identity* (1995) approach masculinity from a psychological perspective, but like most philosophers, they argue that prevailing socio-economic conditions impact directly on the performance of masculinity as enacted by men in specific cultural contexts (350). Of particular interest to my work is their observation that the adherence of men to desirable enactments of masculinity makes them complicit in perpetuating conservative agendas which often advance the interests of others (336). Richard Howson in *Challenging Hegemonic Masculinity* (2006) proposes three intersecting ways of understanding hegemony that differ from Connell's model: detached, dominative and aspirational hegemony (26-33). According to him, the disparity between those enjoying the patriarchal dividend and those who cannot access it is an unbridgeable gulf. Encouraged by the ascendency of inclusivity as a social force, he

also claims that 'aspirational' masculinity can work to the mutual benefit of all members of society.

Sociology and gender

Gender theory is an important subfield of sociology working under the auspice of social constructivism. My research in this area has focussed, primarily, on representations of Aboriginal people, hegemonic masculinities, protest masculinities and the pervasiveness of homophobia. Antonio Gramsci can rightly be considered as the progenitor of theories of hegemonic relations and his work had a profound influence on Raewyn Connell and other researchers in Masculinity Studies. Gramsci was a Marxist theoretician, politician and ideologue who first used the word hegemony to denote what is understood as dominant ideology. He maintained that power structures and unequal interactions between people and society are in flux and not predetermined; as such they are subject to contestation and challenge. For Gramsci, hegemony is an effective way for the privileged elite to exploit the less advantaged in society in a benign way and without resorting to violence.

Connell's *Masculinities* and its theoretical framework of hegemonic masculinities has been highly influential in masculinity studies and has been translated into many languages. Connell expounds on the notion of hegemony as relational, assiduously connected with issues of identity, race, nationhood, gender, colour, sexuality and class. For Connell, hegemony refers to "the cultural dynamic by which a group claims and sustains a leading position on social life" (77); a practice that is not monolithic but organic, steeped in historical and cultural contexts and constantly evolving. Connell proposes that being masculine is fundamentally connected to a socio-historical and cultural context and that

within this context men can choose to enact from several different types of masculinity. It should be noted that to further their economic and social status, men tend to choose to perform a more acceptable version of masculinity that is currying favour at a particular historical juncture. In my research, screen adaptations between 1975 and 2015 illustrate the desirability of being considered to be a mate by other men, which supports Connell's insistence that the performance of masculinity can only be seen as a relational construct. In her formulation of the hegemonic masculinity framework, hegemonic masculinity is used to perpetuate "the legitimacy of patriarchy" (77), entrenching, disseminating and reinforcing certain enactments of masculinity whilst alienating, marginalising and demonising others.

The representation of Aboriginal men in screen texts is another importance facet of this thesis that relates to sociology. Marcia Langton in *Well, I Heard it on the Radio and I Saw it on the Television* (1993) argues that the often derogatory and outdated representations of Aboriginal men in screen adaptations are a way of maintaining the social status quo. In Fiona Probyn's analysis of *One Night the Moon* (2001) she demonstrates how the act of tracking and of 'reading the land' can challenge the imprimatur of settler colonialism. Francesca Merlan also observes that Aboriginal men have been positioned as objects of the white gaze (108) which might account for their stereotypical representation as either marginalised victims or moral custodians of the land. In *Australian Literature: Postcolonialism, Racism, Transnationalism* (2007) Graham Huggan appropriates settler colonialism to the ongoing conflict between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Anthropologist Suneeti Rekhari claims that the tendency to refer to all Aboriginal people as a homogenous entity has facilitated the designation of Aboriginal men as a national and problematized racial object.

Harry Blagg in *Working with Adolescents to Prevent Domestic Violence: Indigenous Rural Model Report* (1999) notes that traditional rites of passage into adulthood for Aboriginal young men have been corrupted and replaced with initiation rites involving alcohol and substance abuse as well as violence. This is explicated in the *Blackfellas* (1993) intertexts. Clare Bradford addresses the familiar terrain of Said's 'Otherness' in reference to how Aboriginal men are represented through the perspective of white characters as observed in *Australian Rules*. Homi Bhabha illustrates the intersectionality that is found within the hegemonic framework of masculinities by illustrating how the figure of the tracker, as seen in *Rabbit-Proof Fence* (2002), is both a victim of colonisation but also complicit in his own oppression through his actions. In a similar vein, Peta Stephenson in *The Outsiders Within: Telling Australia's Indigenous-Asian Story* (2007) confidently asserts that the usurpation of land is achieved via a concerted marginalisation of Aboriginal men.

Greg Dolgopov outlines how Mabo (1936-1992) stands apart from most representations of Aboriginal masculinity and praises how the real-life Australian icon refused to be categorised as a victim but sought to use his agency as an Aboriginal man for the betterment of others. The work of Mick Dodson in *The Limits of Change: Mabo and Native Title 20 Years On* (2012) was instrumental in crystallising my own thoughts and knowledge about this important historical decision.

The limited and limiting representation of Aboriginal men in Australian screen adaptations is also echoed in the representation of homosexual men as well as non-Anglo-Celtic men. Ghassan Hage in *White Nation* (2000) comments that the lack of complexity associated with the depiction of ethnic characters in Australian film is another way of maintaining class boundaries. He audaciously suggests that multiculturalism is another "mode of domination [that] is presented as a form of

egalitarianism" (87). His comment, pivoting on issues of economic and cultural exclusivity. resonates with Jeffrey Weeks's observation that the subordination of homosexuality is a way of upholding normative homosocial order (191). Minelle Mahtani writes about ethnic minorities in Canada and her views on how such communities are discursively 'Othered' to reinforce the hegemonic 'white' order, are very relevant in the Australian context as well.[12] Finally, Kirsty Whitman claims that working-class masculinity is "centralizing and hegemonic" in defining Australian masculinity (52).

In my research, I have also affirmed that homophobia becomes an apparatus that supports the perpetuation of hegemonic masculinity. In "Masculinity as Homophobia" (1994), Michael S. Kimmel identifies homophobia as "a central organizing principle of our cultural definition of manhood". In *Exploring Masculinities: Identity, Inequality, Continuity and Change* (2016), Tristan Bridges and C. J. Pascoe argue that homophobia, like masculinity, can only be imagined in the plural. Beyond the literal meaning of the word, they argue that other than castigating and punishing homosexuality, or the possibility of homosexuality, homophobias are used to reinforce unequal relations amongst men. I found their assertion that homophobia is utilised as a socialisation process for young men in pursuit of more hegemonic performances of masculinity, unsettling. Stephen Morin and Ellen Garfinkle argue that "male homophobia is observed to serve the function of keeping men within the boundaries of traditionally defined roles" (29). Michael Shapiro in *Cinematic Political Thought: Narrating Race, Nation and Gender* (1999) argues that ideas about sexual identity are always framed in the context of a "homophobic national imaginary" (161) and thus, gay men are represented in limiting and limited depictions in screen texts. Ivan Cañadas argues that a secondary type of

[12] In November 22, 2016, Noel Pearson alleged the ABC was racist in its depiction of Aboriginal people for doing exactly as Mahtani proposes in her work.

victims of homophobia exists which includes men who fail to invigilate the sexuality of their sons. This, to me, highlights the complexities of male homosocial relations and especially the privileging of heteronormativity. Contrastingly, Eric Anderson in *Inclusive Masculinity* (2009) proposes that homophobia is on the decrease in society and that the extreme vehemence and vilification of gay men by conservative forces in the 1980s, in the middle of the AIDS crisis, worked against them and mainstream society started to support non-discriminatory policies. The Marriage Equality wins in the US, UK, Ireland and throughout most of Western Europe can be used to support Anderson's claim.

Cultural studies

I have also encountered many sources of inspiration for my thesis within the discipline of Cultural Studies. Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (2006) was invaluable for clarifying my own ideas about what constitutes a national identity. Daniel Reynaud's *Celluloid Anzacs: The Great War Through Australian Cinema Gallipoli* (2007) was a treasure trove of all the essential tropes of Anzac mythology and similarly Nick Dyrenfurth's *Mateship: A Very Australian History* (2015) outlines in detail how mateship has become inseparable from national identity. What I have discovered in my own research is that the status of mateship is repeatedly applied as a compensatory mode to further the interests of the dominant capitalist elite. *Being Australian: Narratives of National Identity* (2007) by Catriona Elder has also been illuminating, particularly her observations that mateship in Australian screen adaptations is an essential element of dominant masculinity, that egalitarianism has been a key trope in Australian culture and storytelling, rendering "social and economic divisions" invisible (41) and that Australian literature and filmic landscapes are riddled with absent or irresponsible fathers. This resonated with me especially in light of Probyn's observations

about the absent paternalistic father and how this has contributed to a more complex understanding of the 'Stolen Generations.'

Graeme Turner's prolific work, particularly in *National Fictions: Literature, Film and the Construction of Australian Narrative* (1994) has also influenced my own work, particularly his observations on the way enactments of masculinity are entrenched within patriarchal notions of power and privilege. I was also fascinated to read his observations about the stifling nature of mateship which I then applied to my analysis of *Blackrock*. Jackie Hogan's work on the intertwining of nationhood and masculinity (106) was instructive as was Jeanette Hoorn's work on cultural appropriation. Karen Jennings argues that Aboriginality operates "as a signifier of essential difference" (18) whilst Catriona Moore and Stephen Muecke see the limiting representations of Aboriginal masculinity as evidence of a racist impulse within Australian society.

The influence of film scholarship

The development of my thesis has also been influenced by film scholars, theorists, and commentators. Susan Hayward's *Concepts in Cinema Studies* (1996) provided invaluable information about film language, particularly about how naturalism invites the audience to assume the function of the mediating camera and gesturality. The latter confirms Hutcheon's proposal that actors, too, can be considered as adapters (81), which I have briefly addressed in relation to well-known Australian male actors. I have utilised Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949) in my scrutiny of Jim Craig's oedipal trajectory in *The Man from Snowy River* (1992).

Albert Moran and Errol Vieth in *Film in Australia: An Introduction* (2006) point out that homosociality is an important element in Australian film in both drama and comedies.

They also identify the category of 'Troubled Guys' as a perennial subject matter in Australian cinema. I have used this concept in my examination of defiant and toxic masculinities in Chapter 5. I am grateful to Denise Faithfull and Brian Hannant in *Adaptation: A Guide to Adapting Literature to Film* (2007) for alerting me to the visual motif of entrapment in *The Boys*.

The Screening of Australia (1988) by Susan Dermody and Elizabeth Jacka has not been revised since its publication but its detailed appraisal of the 'New Wave of Australian Cinema' remains astounding. I have used their phrase "purified cyphers of mythic intention" (63) as a chapter heading in my discussion of complicit masculinities. John Tulloch proposes in *Legends on the Screen* (1981) that early Australian cinema established the nexus between the Bush as idealised and authentic, and life in the industrialised city as corruptive and oppressive. In *The Oxford Companion to Australian Film* (1999) Brian McFarlane and Geoff Mayer tackle the dichotomy between living in the city and living in the Outback and I explore this further connecting it to defiant masculinities in Chapter 5. Neil Rattigan in *Images of Australia: 100 Films of the New Australian Cinema* (1991) identifies an impulse in filmmakers during Australia's 'New Wave' cinema to promulgate an exclusionary rendition of Australian identity that privileged the Anglo-Australian white population. His observations about "the aestheticization of the Australian landscape" (101) were also influential throughout the development of this work. Pam Cook's hagiographic *Baz Luhrmann* (2010) provided an informative analysis of *Australia*, particularly its attempt to represent "the nation's vicissitudes of the country's colonial past in the global arena" (132). Shane Crilly's thesis, *Gods in Our Own World* (2004), uses psychology in his analysis of Australian cinema (1900-2001) which was cogent in my

work on defiant masculinities, particularly his claims about how domestic spaces are "haunted by the spectre of castration" (87).

Catherine Simpson's categorisation of 'postcolonial ethnic' films (16) in *Diasporas of Australian Cinema* (2009) was valuable. I have used Hamid Naficy's terminology in *An Accented Cinema: Exilic and Diasporic Filmmaking* (2001) to describe films featuring non Anglo-Celtic characters confronting issues of cultural identity (40). I am grateful to Lesley Speed for her observations of aggressive masculinity in 'wogsploitation' films which I apply in my examination of the agency of ethnic identity in a multicultural society.

Katherine Biber notes in *Playing the Man: New Approaches to Masculinity* (1999) that men who do not enact the dominant form of hegemonic Australian masculinity are uncoded as men (29). I incorporate her astute observation of Aboriginal men as being 'impossible men' (228) in Chapter 7. Felicity Collins and Therese Davis in *Australian Cinema After Mabo* (2004) argue that representations of Aboriginal men outline the ambivalence of Aboriginal trackers in our national identity. Their observations of the "afterwardness of colonialism during a moment of intense globalization" (8) has assisted me in unpacking the interplay of hegemonic masculinities between white and Aboriginal men.

In *Gender Trouble Down Under: Australian Masculinities* (2002) David Coad appraises the nexus between masculinity and nationalism, which I then apply to my examination of the music soundtrack in Peter Weir's *Gallipoli* (1981). Coad also makes the connection that the demise of innocence can be an extension of the national experience in WWI. In *The Culture of Queers* (2002), Richard Dyer references the work of Homi Bhabha in viewing heteronormativity as inseparable from gendered discussions about race and his work on

gender stereotypes was instructive; as were his observations about the isolation of gay men from their heteronormative peers. This, he proposes, fosters a type of global identity embedded for gay people in the mass media. Also useful was Vito Russo's *The Celluloid Closet: Homosexuality in the Movies* (1987) in terms of camouflage and subterfuge in the identification of gay characters. Gary Morris writing for *The Queer Encyclopedia of the Visual Arts* (2002) makes some pertinent comments about the cinematic stereotype of 'the sissy' and I have used these in my own assertions that the sissy is used in film to reify the desirability of heteronormativity. Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, in *Hollywood and Europe: Economics, Culture, National Identity, 1945-95* (1998) makes some pertinent observations regarding the function of racial communities in upholding the status quo of the privileged classes. I have drawn on these in my discussion of the appropriation of ethnicity.

Jonathan Rayner's *Contemporary Australian Cinema*: *An Introduction* (2000) was one of the two most influential texts in my work. Other than his erudite observations about individual films such as *Gallipoli* and *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* (1994), he scrupulously identified Australian nascent nationalism as an anti-British sentiment, speculated that Australian identity is synonymous with a certain type of stereotypical masculinity and commented on this through his examination of the male-centred narrative, that he sees as a feature of Australian cinema (110). Tom O' Regan's *Australian National Cinema* (2001) is the most authoritative volume on Australian cinema and in this book, he combines the role of a film historian with that of a post-structuralist analyst. I was particularly struck by his comment that "women, gays and ethnics become the battlers – Muriel, Mitzi and Nick" (160) which to me is evidence of the reinvigoration and legitimacy of Australian cinema.

Methodology

Having studied Australian Literature at the University of Sydney, I was keen to concentrate on Australian texts for my doctoral thesis. The chosen time-span of forty years allows me the opportunity to scrutinise the plurality of masculinities, as communicated in screen adaptations, and to examine shifting perceptions of masculinities. This timeframe is congruent with the growth of research on men and masculinities in Australia as well as the growth of scholarship on adaptation studies. As Fig. 3 illustrates the production of screen adaptations in Australia varies markedly from year to year and this could be attributable to changes in government funding policy of Australian features as well as other incentives.

The argument in my thesis is informed by an interdisciplinary approach in methodology and my interpellation as a qualitative researcher. Uwe Flick endorses the multi-disciplinary focus and approach undertaken by qualitative researchers; in fact, he sees this as a necessity (226). The organic nature of a qualitative researcher defies the use of a singular privileged research approach and accordingly I view my work as a confluence of a number of interpretive and qualitative perspectives including cultural studies, adaptation theory, postcolonialism, social constructionism, film theory, poststructuralism, queer theory, and gender and masculinity studies.

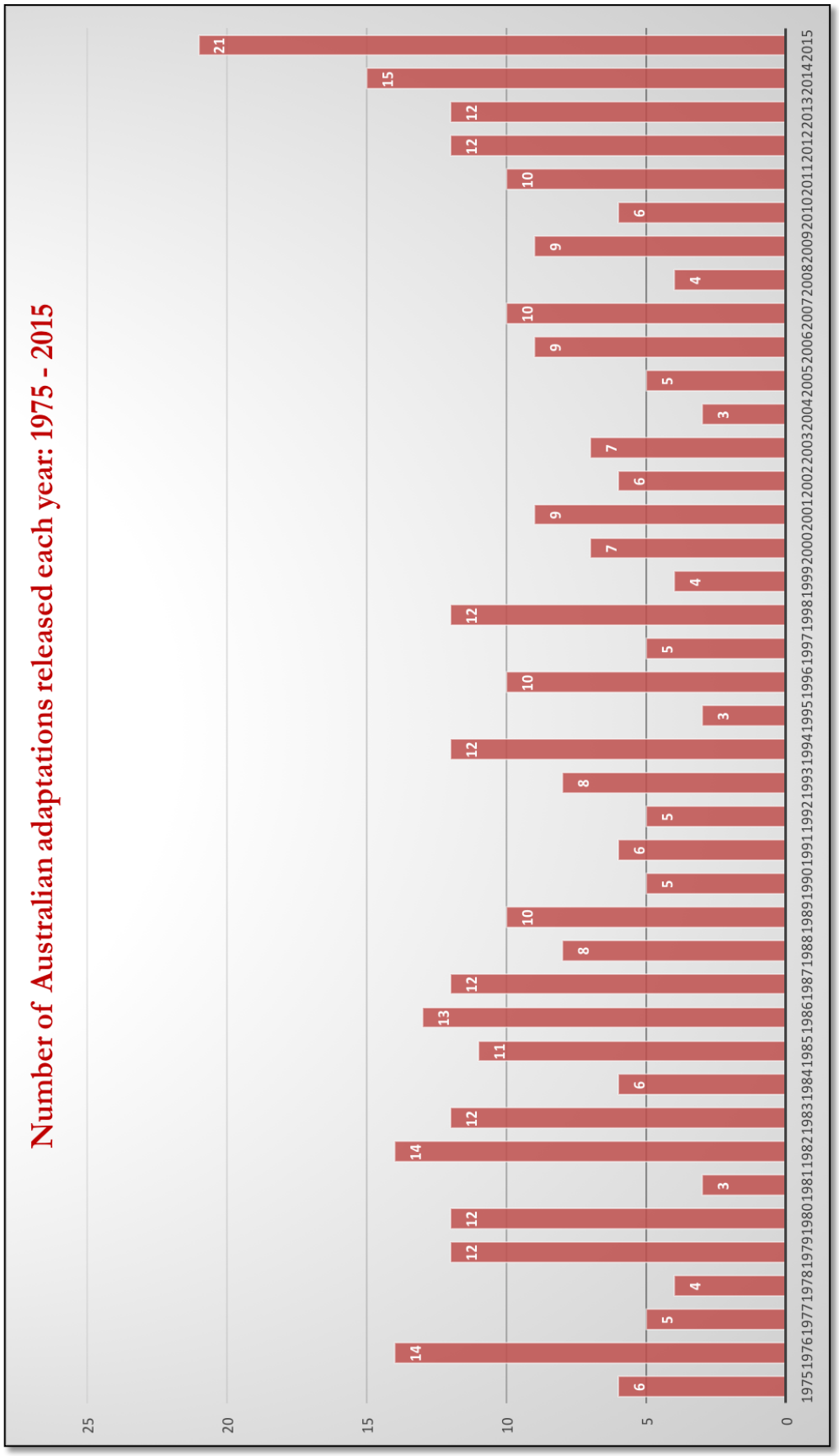

Fig. 3. The number of adaptations in the forty-year period examined in this work.

Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln state that such an interdisciplinary methodological approach as the one I have undertaken emerged in the post-1990 period (2). Even though Fredric Jameson in *Postmodernism, Or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991) cautions that any categorisation of historical time is unreliable, I can assert with confidence that my criss-crossing of disciplines, particularly sociology, film, and theory is appropriate for a critical interrogation of issues pertaining to identity, nationalism, and masculinity. Working within the prism of adaptation studies involves and requires a convergence of methodologies and approaches. Kenneth Howe advises, "no incompatibility exists between quantitative and qualitative methods…there are no good reasons for researchers to fear forging ahead with 'what works'" (16).

My research process was conducted in five distinct stages, but these understandably converged. The first stage of my research process involved the decision to use the MLA referencing system which is advocated by the Schools of Philosophy and English at the University of Tasmania. The 8th edition was released in April 2016 and I adopted this in my work. Also as part of this preparatory 'pre-production' stage I considered the various ethics and challenges I might confront as a researcher, including any gaps in my knowledge as well as the need to follow the principles of academic integrity and ethical scholarship.

The second stage in my research journey involved the examination of different theoretical frameworks and paradigms. Examining the various adaptation texts through the prism of structuralism, postcolonial and queer theory was a sheer pleasure. I am mindful that I am investigating 'representations' of events, people and actions, and no matter how real these may appear to be, I am cognisant of the impossibility of rendering a lived experience or a historical event authentically. Despite Kurzel's artful cinematic

language, we can never know the reality inside the mind of serial-killer John Bunting in *Snowtown* (2011) and similarly, we can never hope to truly understand the personal trauma of the 'Stolen Generations", despite the best efforts of *The Sapphires*, *Rabbit-Proof Fence* and *Australia*.

The third stage of the research process involved the selection of strategies which was straightforward given the subject matter of my work. What proved problematic was the identification and gathering of all 362 screen adaptations produced in Australia in this forty-year-period and deciding which ones I would choose to analyse in detail. The fourth stage of my research process involved data management methods and close textual study. I found making notes on numerous aspects of the 362 adaptations on

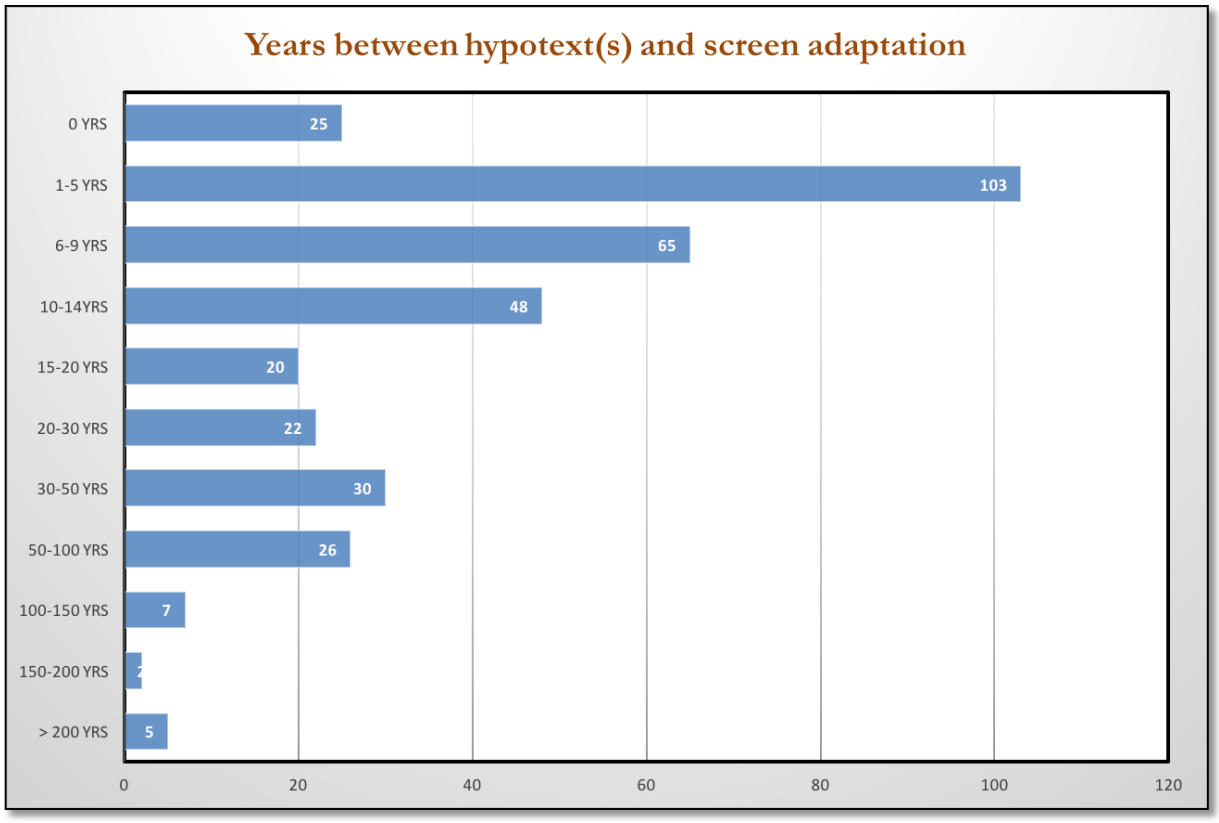

Fig. 4. This chart shows the time lapse between the production/publication of the 'original' source material and its screen adaptation.

Excel spreadsheets enabled me to extrapolate data, at the point of need, through the 'sorting' function of the program. As part of my collection of empirical data via Excel, (see Fig. 4), I have established that the average time lapse between an original source and its screen adaptation in the forty years I have examined is 17.1 years. In order to not dilute my findings, I have excluded classic texts (such as those by Shakespeare) from this investigation. It would be fascinating for future researchers to speculate how the intervening years between hypo and hyper texts necessitated changes in order to resonate with prevailing ideologies. I will restrict myself to one example here. The 1988 TV miniseries of *The Shiralee* was adapted from the 1955 novel of the same name by D'Arcy Niland. In the thirty-three years since the release of the popular novel a great deal had changed in Australian society particularly the role of women and the treatment of Aboriginal people. Lilly is a more peripheral figure in the novel whereas in the screen adaptation she is transformed into a central character whose sensibility and resilience resemble Macauley's (the protagonist of the text). His statements that belittle women pepper the text, for example, "he hated the ignominy of capitulating to a harlot, and a black one at that" (Niland 137) but Macauley's evident misogyny culminates in the violent rape of a young Aboriginal servant on Wigley's station. This is entirely omitted from the miniseries. I trust Fig.4 will be a catalyst for future researchers to scrutinise the role that 'time' plays in the adaptation process. I also found the computer program XMind an invaluable mind-mapping tool that enabled me to locate points of comparison and points of divergence in different groupings of texts.

The non-availability of some texts, such as *Evil Angels* (1988), *Blackrock* and *Moving Out* (1983) caused some unease and frustration, especially when some films were only available in Region 1 or Region 2 formats. Some television programs such as *The Harp in*

the South and *A Town Like Alice*, despite their huge ratings success had never been released on DVD but, luckily, these were uploaded to YouTube. The 2017 launch of the streaming service www.ozflix.tv/ will address many such problems for future researchers. The final stage of my research involved interpreting, evaluating, drafting, editing, and revising my material.

An appealing metaphor that has gained a lot of scholarly attention to describe a methodological interdisciplinary approach, such as mine, is that of a 'bricoleur'; a term from cultural anthropology. My interdisciplinary approach positions me as an interpretive, theoretical and critical bricoleur and I relish the proposition of Claude Levis-Strauss (the progenitor of the term) that a bricoleur can be defined as a "Jack of all trades, a kind of professional do-it-yourself[er]" (17).

As an interpretive bricoleur, I am aware of my positioning as a researcher and mindful that my own experiences, skills, identity and subject positioning do not exercise an undue influence on my critical evaluation and interpretation of my research. Critical bricoleurs, according to Joe L. Kincheloe, highlight the "dialectical and hermeneutic nature of interdisciplinary inquiry knowing that the boundaries between traditional disciplines no longer hold" (683), a definition that encapsulates my approach. Finally, as a theoretical bricoleur I navigate through a number of critical ways of thinking including postmodernity, gender theory, queer theory and postcolonialism. From poststructuralism I have learnt to value and appreciate the instability of certainty and meaning because language, as a series of signs and referents, is always fluid. Postmodernism has often been approached in educational circles as a genre in its own right with pastiche, reflexivity, and irreverent humour as some of its characteristic tropes. I clearly reject this and view postmodernism as a powerful and constructive way of thinking that rejects absolutism

and exclusivity in methodology, philosophy, evaluation and interpretation; viewing it, rather, as a sensibility that relishes its contested and unstable formation.

Thesis Outline

Chapter 1 briefly addresses the elusive hegemons within a socio-cultural Australian context and claims that such manifestations are indeed rare. The chapter argues that embodiments of hegemonic masculinities and institutional power operate both on the local and on the global level. Given that hegemonic masculinity ought to occupy the apex of a relational framework of masculinities, its deafening silence in Australian adaptations begs the question of what is valued and favoured in Australian screen culture as the most esteemed manifestation of condoned masculinity? The chapters that follow propose to answer this question.

Chapter 2 is a critical interrogation of the venerated larrikin figure which remains an enduring archetype in Australia's cultural landscape and is synonymous with the bushman figure. The chapter examines hegemonic masculinities in terms of how Australian screen adaptations privilege traditional notions of Australians as larrikins. Such texts communicate an idealised masculine narrative of Australian men as larrikins who value their freedom, eschew responsibility and are suspicious of institutions and the law. They are resourceful, proud men who remain emotionally detached.

Chapter 3 analyses mateship as an idealised equalising state in homosocial relations between men in Australia and proposes that mateship can disguise fissures in Australia's 'classless' society and obfuscate marked economic discrepancies. The chapter scrutinises the changing depiction of mateship as an essential element of Australian masculine

identity, particularly its associated traits of loyalty stoicism, dependability, and group belonging.

Chapter 4 explores the idealisation, fetishisation and reconfiguration of the Anzac hero in the national imagination in the context of postcolonialism, pacifism and multiculturalism. It also examines the nexus between hegemonic and complicit masculinities but in terms of nationalism. Specifically, the chapter explores the ways in which Australian screen adaptations address and reconfigure the male warrior.

Chapter 5 addresses the juxtaposition between city and bush living as well as the rivalry that exists between men in a hierarchical social order. These tensions between men reify power, violence and misogyny and highlight the threat of ostracism from a tiered patriarchal order. The chapter concentrates on the challenges of defiant masculinities, juxtaposing the enactment of masculinities evident in the bushman/urban dweller dichotomy. One aspect explored is the chasm between the esteemed 'working class ethic' associated with the Outback and the ideology espoused by the rising professional classes living in the urban centres. It also examines the role of imposing hegemonic masculinity through the domination of others, most routinely through conflict and violence.

Chapter 6 focusses on subordinated masculinities and the paucity of homosexual characters in Australian screen adaptations. The subordination of homosexuals in Australian screen adaptations is the most recognisable form of how one group of men stigmatise, traumatise and oppress another group through homophobia as a way of maintaining their own privileged position.

Chapter 7 tackles subordinated masculinities and the 'impossible' indigenous man. In a synoptic manner, this chapter will analyse how changing cultural mores, ideology and the

law have been responsible for redefining the place of indigenous Australians within a more inclusive notion of hegemonic masculinities. It is argued here that Aboriginal men have been marginalised and identified as 'the other' and subjected to the control and power of the European colonisers. Also, it is argued that Aboriginal men tend to be represented within the dual discourses of infantilisation and vanquishment and that such discourses combine to produce their own limited and limiting stereotypical representations of Aboriginal men.

Chapter 8 focusses on marginalised masculinities in terms of ethnicity and examines the value of family in multicultural Australia, the prejudice and discrimination endured by ethnic Australians as well as the ascendency of ethnic pride. The context of the films mentioned here, and their locale in the urban environment, is part of the cultural shift in Australian cinema, away from the historicism of the past and away from the 'Australian Film Commission' landscape film, proposed by Joe Hardwick ("Rules" 90).

*

This introductory chapter has flagged the 'genderlessness' of Australian men and the repercussions of this hitherto 'invisibility' of men, as a gender, at the familial, regional and global level. Before the growth of masculinity studies, in the last four decades, the status of men in the articulation of a national identity was perceived as normative both in terms of race and gender. This opening chapter also outlined the importance of Connell's formulation of the hegemonic masculinity framework as a way of legitimising, rallying, and challenging the unprecedented power and privilege of an elite group of men over other men and women. What will be explored throughout the work is the elusive nature of hegemonic supremacy; its fluidity, as well as its relational nature according to

prevailing cultural and social mores. Particularly, I will be arguing that, in the Australian context, the quest for acceptance and legitimisation in the homosocial zone of men does not align with the domain of the rich and powerful hegemons but is to be found within the averageness of working-class masculinity, which enjoys such an exalted status in Australia that it is indeed conjoined with national identity.

Chapter 1

The Elusive Hegemons

The representation of men who are powerful, controlling, authoritative and whose actions impact significantly on the lives of other men is rare in Australian screen adaptations. When their presence is highlighted in screen texts it is always a point of contrast to the 'average Australian man'. Such men can be viewed as monoliths of patriarchal privilege and are routinely presented to audiences as characters who are strong, decisive, and non-feminine. Elizabeth Badinter attests that this stereotype of masculinity is a constant variable globally and that "most cultures have adhered to this masculine ideal and created their own models, but it is America, without cultural rival, which has imposed its images of virility on the whole world" (129). This stance is contested in this work.

In sociology and popular culture, hegemonic masculinities have become synonymous with the most extolled and the most visible manifestation of 'idealised' masculinity. I will illustrate in the various chapters of this thesis that the enactment of one's masculinity is not only a 'performance', but it is also a process that is routinely executed under the invigilation of other men who authorise, or castigate, a manifestation of being and enactment of the 'perceived' role of a man. I will explain that the performance of masculinities is subject to change and to prevailing socio-cultural and economic conditions and, above all, it is discursively unstable and subject to various challenges. Here, I would briefly like to draw attention to how embodiments of hegemonic masculinity become manifest on a global scale and suggest that such enactments in the context of a globally-interconnected world in the 21st century are particularly significant because of the way they interpellate men in a relational framework of masculinities.

As proposed by Richard Howson in "Re-Thinking Aspiration and Hegemonic Masculinity in Transnational Context" (2014) the clash between the global hegemons and their subordinates is too nuanced to be considered detached. In some texts set in the past and produced before the Bicentennial, such as *Sunday Too Far Away* (1975) and *The Shiralee*, the differentiation between the privileged ruling class and their subordinates is taken for granted. Such texts nostalgically recall the battles between the proletarians and the bourgeoisie, which in the Australian context is routinely represented through the landed gentry.

Conversely, more recent texts, also set in the past, such as *Australia* and *Red Dog* present a

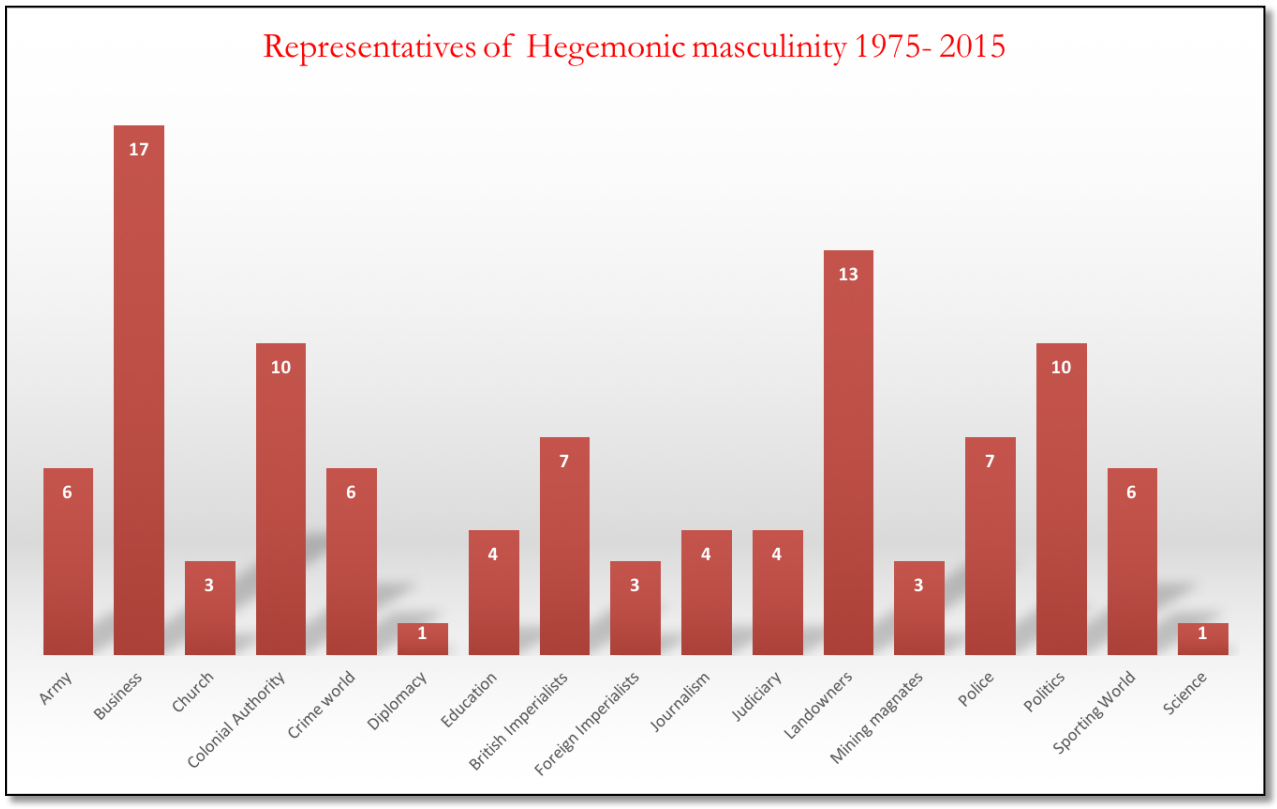

Fig. 5. The representation of authorising and domineering men is located within different occupations. This is a visual illustration summarising how agents of patriarchal power can be located in the 362 screen adaptations examined as part of this work.

more complex relationship between privileged, complicit and marginalised masculinities. Many adaptations set in the past certainly privilege the working-class battler as the idealised Australian. More importantly, by extolling the contribution of the working-class battler in Australian society, screen adaptations reinforce its eulogised status.

The representation of hegemons in the screen adaptations of *Bastard Boys*, *The Hunter* (2011), *Devil's Dust* (2012) and to a lesser extent *Underground: The Julian Assange Story* (2012) and *Three Dollars* (2005), has expanded the concept of hegemonic masculinity to national and international levels. I am emphasising here the importance of geomacro and geomicro levels in the examination of masculinities and assert that the links between these are crucial in understanding the enactment of masculinities. Local colour and authenticity of cultural experience, including the use of idiom and Australian accents, are paramount in the examination of masculinities on the geomicro level, as is the avoidance of fetishisation of this into an inimitable entity. Conversely, on the geomacro level, consumerist and technological prowess highlights, substitutes and/or amplifies the physical powers of privileged men's bodies, as represented in the screen adaptations mentioned above. Economic restructuring, globalisation, interconnectivity and the movement of people all impact on the contestation of hegemonic masculinity.

A brief discussion of hegemons in Australian screen adaptations is salient at this juncture of a thesis dealing with the relational aspects of masculinity within a hegemonic framework. As the adaptation intertexts of *Three Dollars*, *Bastard Boys*, *The Hunter*, *Devil's Dust* and *Underground: The Julian Assange Story* communicate, the role of the elusive hegemons can be located in Australian culture both on the local and on the global level. Revealingly, the identification of such hegemons is often obfuscated, but when it is revealed it manifests only in contrast to the perennial working-class battler archetype,

favoured in Australian screen culture as the most esteemed manifestation of condoned masculinity.

Firstly, in *Bastard Boys*, the characters of working-class waterside workers Tony Tully and Sean McSwain are juxtaposed with the hegemonic power encapsulated by Patrick CEO, Chris Corrigan.[13] *Bastard Boys* tells the story of the 1998 waterfront dispute which has been adapted from *Waterfront: The Battle That Changed Australia* (2000) by Helen Trinca and Anne Davies. Corrigan is depicted in *Bastard Boys* as the embodiment of power in corporate Australia. The character of Corrigan in the screen adaptation becomes an amalgam of politicians and business figures involved in the historical dispute. This practical decision undertaken by the writer of *Bastard Boys* Sue Smith may have been influenced by Marxist philosopher Georg Lukács' assertion that, since a truthful representation of an idea or an event is impossible, one can only approximate this through a mimetic representation (100). Such a mimetic exemplification can be achieved by the construction of characters who are believably typical of their cultural context and yet surpass these confines through their rich individualisation.

Bastard Boys argues that economists, industrialists and politicians are the true scions of hegemonic masculinity in contemporary Australia. This is particularly well-illustrated in Episode Four during an evening meeting of a group of 'anonymous' bankers, uniformly attired in dark clothing, who threaten to destroy Corrigan's business ventures unless he can reach settlement with the warring unions and restore peace on the waterfront. The restoration of peace in the shipping industry coincides with the political interests of the Howard Federal Government which paradoxically were responsible for instigating the

[13] The Patrick Corporation was an Australian conglomerate which was acquired by Toll Logistics in 2006. The latter was, in turn, acquired by the international conglomerate Japan Post Holdings in 2015; the world's thirteenth largest company.

open hostilities between the workers and their employer in the first place. This scene reiterates that real power in contemporary Australia rests within the finance sector and their economic and financial imperatives.

Corrigan and Greg Combet, in *Bastard Boys*, contest hegemonic power within their own working context. Both embrace a more contemporary understanding of an emerging inclusive masculinity that relies on intellectual prowess for success, as demonstrated in the characters' conciliatory approach to business and by their ability to effectively strategise and manipulate others. Both Corrigan and Combet, the union leader working for the Maritime Union of Australia, maintain a high level of personal integrity in their family lives, both work assiduously in their respective roles and both fervently believe that their corresponding actions are in the best interests of the workforce and Australia at large.[14] Both characters have been furnished with idiosyncrasies that serve to highlight their non-traditional enactment of masculinity; for example, Combet is an ornithologist. The production values of *Bastard Boys* highlight the similarities between the two men by dyeing the hair of both actors to a similar dark tone and by providing them both with identically fashioned tortoiseshell glasses. More significantly the coalescing of the two characters is suggested by their lack of mates and their reliance on their respective wives for the support and assurance traditionally afforded by mateship.

The 2012 television miniseries *Devil's Dust* also addresses hegemonic power through the contrast between working-class battlers and more economically powerful men. *Devil's Dust*, directed by Jessica Hobbs in 2012 was adapted from the non-fiction book *Killer Company* (2009) by Matt Peacock. It presents its working-class protagonist, Bernie

[14] Following his work for the ACTU, Mr Combet entered politics and served as Minister for both the Federal Governments of Mr Rudd and Ms Gillard.

Banton, as an "inspirational leader, and an emblematic Australian" (Quinlan 273). The adaptation intertexts detail the cover-up perpetuated by James Hardie Industries regarding the detrimental impact of asbestos on the lives of ordinary Australians as well as on their own employees. This asbestos conspiracy was a calculated strategy designed to protect the economic interests of the privileged hegemons in society.[15] In the hypotext, the investigative writer provides documentation for his readers that "the highest echelons in James Hardie knew of mesothelioma and the dangers of asbestos dust two years before Banton began to work for the company" (Peacock 6). The television drama, as part of its narrative distillation, presents two portrayals of hegemonic power to the audience: John B. Reid, the company man whose negligent actions have resulted in many deaths and the fictional character of Adam Bourke. The privileged lifestyle of Reid is communicated subtly for the audience through mise-en-scène and production values as well as by referencing his public philanthropic acts. The inscrutable persona adopted by actor Pip Miller, however, in his portrayal of Reid highlights the hypocrisy of his professional persona and communicates his ruthlessness to the audience, prompting Graeme Blundell to comment "it's certainly hard to imagine any corporation believing it could get away with a "mendacious, calculated strategy to maximise profits and minimise compensation" ("No Clean" par. 8). Such actions, condemned by the High Court of Australia, clearly mark Reid as a villainous hegemon yet the fictional figure of Adam Bourke, his employee, is far more interesting as an embodiment of complicit hegemonic status. Bourke, the affable family man, is initially presented as a professional battler who is slowly enticed into acting against his own ethical beliefs because he does not want to compromise his ascendant economic status. His involvement with a host of

[15] According to the advocacy group, asbestos.com, "Australia has the second-highest mesothelioma death rate in the world…leaving its mark on the nation with more than 10,000 people succumbing to the disease since the early 1980s."

other complicit workers including lawyers, publicists, and lobbyists illustrates how the framework of hegemonic masculinities operates to advance the status of a select group of men at a personal cost over others.[16]

The adaptation of Julia Leigh's 1997 novel *The Hunter* concerns itself with bioprospecting, or biopiracy as it is often referenced in social media. Its lead character Martin David, known only as 'M' in the novel, is an ascetic mercenary which places him in a morally ambiguous and unstable category. David, portrayed by Willem Dafoe, is ambivalent about his mission because even though he feels awe and respect for his hunting ground in the wilderness of northern Tasmania, he nonetheless is complicit in capturing the Tasmanian thylacine (declared extinct some fifty years previously) and clone its venom for biological warfare.[17] Rjurik Davidson argues that the viewer is prepared to accept the biotech company as a shadowy international organisation because of the proliferation of such a cinematic trope ("Melancholy" 33).[18] If the Tasmanian tiger is a metonym of "our failings as a colonising nation", as proposed by Paul Mitchell (5), then its hunting in 2011 is an insidious attempt to uphold the power and economic privilege of the global hegemons.

Eddie Harnovey, the chemical engineer at the core of the adaptation of *Three Dollars*, is initially positioned as a member of the Australian middle-class bourgeoisie but, as the narrative unfolds, his status as a battler is revealed as he aligns himself with the disenfranchised and marginalised members of society. Harnovey is dismissed from work because he refuses to acquiesce to his employer's demands to falsify records, which

[16] including 2016 Australian Foreign Minister, Julie Bishop, who in her work as a lawyer was defending compensation claims against CSR by asbestos mining workers who had contracted mesothelioma.
[17] Martin David is an agent of a European biotech conglomerate, Redleaf, obsessed with the notion that a thylacine has survived alone in the impenetrable Tasmanian terrain despite having been officially declared extinct in 1996 – fifty years after the last surviving animal at Hobart zoo died.
[18] The *Alien* film franchise (1979-2012) utilises this trope profusely.

would be advantageous to land developers. Harnovey's employer Gerald, a ruthless and corrupt developer at the Department of Planning and Environment, upholds the interests of the powerful business hegemons, who according to the novel's author, have created a "complete and absolute reliance on the morality of market, which is the morality of the jungle' (Pearlman 141). The futility of battling the might of the global hegemons is demonstrated through Harnovey's attempts to maintain his integrity as both a family man and an ethical Australian professional battler with a social conscience who refuses to act corruptly. This confrontation is emblematic of "the times which made powerful and arrogant buffoons out of little people who might otherwise have spent their whole lives misguidedly waiting for the realisation of a potential they did not have" (Pearlman 191). Tellingly, Harnovey's enactment of masculinity harkens to earlier and highly esteemed portrayals of Australian working-class bushmen and their affinity with the land. The landscape of the great Australian outdoors, which has been such a linchpin in defining Australian identity during the New Wave cinema, is now presented in *Three Dollars* as contaminated and in the service of morally-moribund developers; the "pernicious power of big business" (Capp 12).

The activist Julian Assange is also aligned with the mythologised figure of the anti-authoritarian battler deeply entrenched in the Australian psyche. Tim Kroenert, in fact, refers to Assange as "Ned Kelly armed with a dial-up modem" (32). The Robert Connolly television adaptation (2012) has been adapted from the 1997 book *Underground: Tales of Hacking, Madness and Obsession on the Electronic Frontier* by Suelette Dreyfus and co-authored by Assange himself. The adaptation intertexts present Assange as a rebellious figure, inspired by the political activism of his mother, unconcerned by prevailing mores and niceties in society, who is determined to challenge the prolific power of the über--

hegemon itself, the US and their clandestine involvement in the first Gulf War. The adaptation intertexts represent the young Assange positively as a modest, ambitious and fiercely intelligent dismantler of social hierarchies. Others, however, have commented on the paradoxical representation of Assange. Whilst praising his public advocacy and call for institutional transparency, Kroenert takes issue with Assange's "grandiose future plans and libertine behaviour" (32). Joel Deane views him as "an alpha-wolf with a messiah complex" (10) and Patrick Morgan considers him a prototype of a certain power-driven personality common in our age (30). Similarly, Jo Dillon, in her analysis of Connolly's film, comments on the tension between government and dissenters in an era of unprecedented access to technology, information and the power that the two together bring ("Hacker's Progress" 38). Accordingly, what is informative about the Connolly adaptation, is its subtle proposal that the tiers within the hegemonic framework of masculinity are not monolithic in their manifestation but fluid and always interacting - evolving to suit prevailing social conditions and circumstances.

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This brief chapter provided a synoptic view of how hegemony operates on the national and international level through powerful, often 'unseen' representatives of institutions which, despite the considerable socio-political and economic power they exert, are morally-moribund. Such hegemons do not perform an idealised enactment of masculinity that can resonate with Australian readers and audiences who seem to value egalitarianism above all else. The chapters that follow herein explore the type of masculinity that is socially condoned within the Australian context, as seen through the prism of representation and the adaptation process.

Chapter 2

The Australian larrikin and the conundrum of hegemonic masculinities

Russel Ward in *The Australian Legend* (1958) first identified the larrikin as an essential element of Australian masculinity and identity. He asserted that the larrikin, who we now recognise as a mythic stock figure, was forged in the bush at a time of fervent nationalism in the closing decades of the nineteenth century. The endearing larrikin figure has since been a comforting paean to traditional white masculinity, as evident in adaptations ranging from *Crocodile Dundee* to *Red Dog*. The figure of the larrikin is indistinguishable from the working-class battler and is enacted in many screen adaptations as both a physical type, forged in the iconography of the bush, particularly the stockman archetype, and also, as Catriona Elder observes, as "someone bound up with a range of qualities and values emerging from working men's lives" (40). The figure of the larrikin has been so prolific and enduring in cultural representations that it is routinely recognised as a revered archetype and synonymous with being Australian.

This chapter argues that the archetype of the larrikin is a uniquely Australian phenomenon and it is inseparable from the 'Aussie battler' archetype which Kirsty Whitman observes is "both visible through its hegemonic status and cultural ubiquity, and invisible as the marker of normative Australian identity" (50). One of Australia's first screen adaptations only eighteen years after Australia's Federation was Raymond Longford's 1919 silent film *The Sentimental Bloke* based on the larrikin poems by C. J. Dennis (1915). It depicts a larrikin factory worker, Bill, who is sent to prison for gambling and is later reformed with the help of a working-class 'sheila', Doreen. I mention this historical adaptation because it celebrated the working-class battler ethos of

its larrikin hero and the privileging of this performance of masculinity has assumed such a centralising position in the Australian psyche. The pervasiveness of the larrikin figure can be demonstrated by a scrutiny of six screen adaptations, ranging from its unproblematic iconic representation in adaptations such as *Crocodile Dundee* and *Cloudstreet* (2011), to its oppressive and malevolent representations in *Muriel's Wedding* (1994) and *Wolf Creek 2* (2013), and finally to its recalibration as part of inclusive masculinities in *The Wog Boy* (2000) and *Australia.* Accordingly, I am proposing that the accretion of the different manifestations of the archetypal Australian figure of the larrikin is evidence that there exists a plurality of masculinities in Australian adaptations and that these pluralities vary according to the prevailing ideologies of society at specific historical junctures, as proposed by Michael S. Kimmel and Michael Messner (2007). The forty-year span covered in this thesis captures these historical shifts in the depiction of the larrikin. The larrikin is venerated and put forward as a globally-condoned and commodified enactment of masculinity in *Crocodile Dundee* whilst it is nostalgically recalled and celebrated in the adaptation of Tim Winton's *Cloudstreet*. *Muriel's Wedding,* however, presents a damning portrayal of masculinity through the larrikin figure of Bill Heslop. Similarly, *Wolf Creek 2* presents a highly incendiary depiction of a stylised form of masculinity that is conjoined with homicide and psychopathy. What makes Greg McLean's film particularly disturbing is that its pernicious protagonist, Mick Taylor, is a proud native of the mythic Outback that has been the cradle of the larrikin and battler archetypes.[19] Contrastingly, *Australia* and *The Wog Boy* locate and celebrate the larrikin within a multicultural, pro-Aboriginal and reconciliatory framework of hegemonic masculinity, challenging the supremacy and patriarchal power of the white Anglo-Celtic male. Collectively all these contrasting representations suggest that all forms of

[19] The *Wolf Creek* franchise continued in 2016 with a 6-hour miniseries screen on *Stan*.

hegemonic masculinity are organic and capable of being revised according to the changing mores and the socio-cultural and economic conditions of a particular society.

The figure of the Australian larrikin archetype nurtured in the Australian bush as suggested by Maryrose Casey (216) is enterprising and independent; he is loyal to his mates and country; he remains cheerfully undisciplined; he is brave and courageous in the face of adversity (both natural and anthropogenic); is laconic and reserved with his emotions and is proud to use the Australian vernacular.

The word larrikin traditionally identifies a working-class, non-conformist, anti-establishment figure, who is comfortable using the Australian vernacular and according to David Coad is prone to "heavy drinking, violence, vulgarity and criminality" (10). The success of Peter Faiman's film *Crocodile Dundee* is associated with its creation of a distinct Australian larrikin. In the film, Dundee's mythical standing has arisen from a popular yarn involving an alleged savage mauling by a crocodile, the subsequent demise of the marauding beast, and Mick's resilience in reaching safety some hundreds of miles away. This tall story, or yarn, is treated with a degree of irreverence by the locals in the Northern Territory and echoes the scepticism afforded to Ansell's survival story which some claim was only a pretence because he was illegally poaching crocodiles. [20]

The central titular figure of Dundee is simultaneously a parody and a homage to Australian masculinity because he is presented as inseparable from the Outback he inhabits. The film "continues the aestheticization of the Australian landscape" (Rattigan, 101) that was such a hallmark of the AFC genre, but here it is not a malevolent force, as

[20] The film was adapted from the real-life story of Rod Ansell, whose documentary *To Fight the Wild* was screened on the BBC in 1979. Ansell was interviewed by Michael Parkinson in 1981 and parts of what was recounted in this interview are used verbatim in the film as are incidents in the documentary. Ansell was shot by the police at the age of 44 and various obituaries describe him as the real Mick Dundee.

depicted in earlier adaptations such as *Picnic at Hanging Rock* (1975). The mythical Outback in *Crocodile Dundee* is used, as Neil Rattigan explains, as a way of communicating characterisation clearly to the audience (101). Mick Dundee, like all larrikins throughout colonial literature, is above all an active character and one who is aligned with the figure of the working-class battler as evoked through his gesturality, costume, and speech. He possesses physical strength and an uncomplicated nature and his large knife is a metonym for his virility. Dundee abounds in confidence and shows the visiting New York journalist Sue Chartlon "how a real man handles himself in the wild, subduing a bull, cracking a snake in half, and knifing a crocodile" (Crofts 163). Dundee is a laconic yarn spinner and exemplifies these uniquely Australian characteristics, because as claimed by Philip Adams, "Australian heroes tend to undercut their own self-importance with irony" (Crofts 162). Despite his boastfulness, Dundee is resourceful and at ease in his environment, the Outback, as shown by "his skills with animals, his knowledge of the land and understanding of Aboriginal culture (Rayner 19).

Bush larrikinism, embodied by actor Paul Hogan in the film, is an accretion of Hogan's work as a comedian on Australian television over many years, particularly his derision of elitism and his allegiance to working-class politics and discourse. Dundee's ability to be adroit, affable and yet at the same time a loner is a characteristic of the adventure genre of films, as observed by Albert Moran and Errol Vieth (*Film in Australia* 20) and yet it is Dundee's passionate advocacy of egalitarianism and his embracing of Aboriginal culture and beliefs which are uniquely Australian.

Historically, the notion of the unworldly working-class Australian abroad is a characteristic of notable successful comedies such as *The Adventures of Barry McKenzie* (1972) and even though, like Barry, Mick involves himself in several fumbling incidents

in New York, he is never as daft as Barry, nor is he as sexually rapacious. What aligns Dundee as a contemporary figure is the destination of his peripatetic adventures that do not take him to the 'motherland', that is traditionally associated with the colonial myth of Empire, but to the new world, America, Australia's closest military ally and trading partner in the 1980s. His status as an 'everyman' who lacks pretension and is at ease in any environment imbues Dundee's masculinity with both the larrikinism and working-class city ethos of *Gallipoli*'s Frank Dunne as well as the bushman expertise, idealism, and patriotism of Archy Hamilton.

Despite the rich history of the larrikin figure, it was only in the 1980s that *Crocodile Dundee* transformed and commodified this archetype into a global and marketable tourist product (Blackwood 493). The success of *Crocodile Dundee*, both in Australia and abroad, is telling considering how patterns of masculinity manifest themselves according to prevailing socio-cultural mores at the familial, regional and global level.[21] Commentators outside Australia have been highly critical of the brand of masculinity embodied by the Dundee character. Milton Shulman in the *Evening Standard* decried "the Australians have cultivated vulgarity as a national art form. The image of the broad-hatted, square-jawed, hard-drinking lout called Barry or Wally has become an antipodean version of John Bull or Uncle Sam" (Crofts 161).

Perhaps what critics outside Australia have failed to grasp is that Australian working-class masculinity is unifying and a status to aspire to. Working-class masculinity in Australia continues to occupy a position that is at the centre of discourses about gender, class, race, sexuality and national identity (Whitman 52). Because of this, it can be claimed that

[21] The film grossed close to 48 million dollars at the Australian box office in 1986 and it remains the most successful film at the Australian Box Office at the time of writing. *Crocodile Dundee* has earned 322 million dollars worldwide. Both figures are unadjusted for inflation.

Hogan's crowning achievement is to reenergize the figure of the larrikin and disseminate this both in Australia and abroad. Or, as Andrew Zielinski notes, "Dundee is now the archetype, full of the stereotypical, superficial narrowing of identity" (131).

Another depiction of the Australian larrikin battler can be located in Tim Winton's award-winning novel, *Cloudstreet*, first published in 1991, then first adapted as a popular stage play in 1998 and then as a television miniseries in 2011, directed by Matthew Saville. Despite the phenomenal success of Winton's novel, the television miniseries failed to resonate with audiences abroad and it was only screened in the United Kingdom.[22] Possibly this is because the working-class larrikin/battler figure enjoys a privileged and unique status in Australia which fails to resonate with audiences elsewhere. Christine Beasley acknowledges this and argues that the battler identity within the hegemonic framework of masculinities can be viewed as a 'local sub-hegemonic' manifestation, but proceeds to argue that within Australia it enjoys a canonical status and it is inseparable from perceptions of national identity (*Male Bodies* 63).

Sam Pickles is the central larrikin figure in *Cloudstreet* and his gambling misfortunes are pivotal in initiating and advancing the narrative. The official Showtime *Cloudstreet* website highlights this larrikinism: "Sam's basically a classic knockabout Aussie bloke who would rather react to problems by doing nothing until they went away, than actually work to solve them." In contrast to Mick Dundee, who ventures abroad and finds success, both economic and personal, Pickles remains rooted in his parochial locale and without the patriarchal dividend that is afforded to Dundee.

[22] The novel was the winner of the prestigious *Miles Franklin Literary Award*. The *Australian Society of Authors* voted *Cloudstreet* as their best Australian novel in 2003, a recognition which was echoed by the listeners of Radio National. In 2012, the *First Tuesday Book Club* television program, on the ABC, placed Winton's novel on top of the "10 Aussie Books You Must Read Before You Die".

The characterisation of Pickles, originally from regional Australia, is a typical larrikin figure who embodies most of the characteristics of this enduring Australian enunciation of masculinity. Perhaps he is the closest to the larrikin prototype, originally made popular in the 1860s, when the term was used to categorise men who were "poor, engaged in factory work or attempting to earn a living on the street" (Bellanta 13). Pickles, as played by Stephen Curry, is humorous, witty, resourceful, hard-drinking and dispassionate by nature; he possesses an independent spirit that refuses to be subjugated by various institutions including that of marriage and fatherhood. He values the notion of hard work as opposed to actually working hard and he is essentially patriotic without kowtowing to authority figures. Despite his physical disability he is good with his hands, and refuses to recognise class distinctions. This is congruent with Catriona Elder's claim that egalitarianism has been a recognisable trope in Australia and that "egalitarianism makes class a neutral descriptor that adds colour to the story without inflecting it with the stridency of social and economic division" (41).

Central to the understanding of this prototype of Australian masculinity, as personified by Pickles, is an appreciation of larrikin humour that never wavers, even when confronted by extraordinarily dire circumstances and inordinate bouts of bad luck. Pickles's quick-wit is demonstrated with aplomb in the Saville adaptation when he spies Lester Lamb (who has been butchering a sheep with his bloody meat cleaver) and immediately tells the unwelcomed visitor, "he's a mad bastard – be careful. Look at this, for chrissake!" (Disc 2, 1:19:15) holding up his stump[23].

[23] The intertextual allusion to *Sweeney Todd* that follows (which is not in the novel) is sufficient to make the anonymous visitor flee.

Pickles's adversaries throughout the saga, such as government employees, prime minister Menzies and trade union officials, are all perceived in terms of class, as antagonists to his working-class ethos and commitment to a sense of 'fair go'. Pickles believes that "people are who they are" (Disc 1, 1:36:09), a phrase repeated several times in the television adaptation. His foibles and mistrust of authority, including organised religion, present him as a typical larrikin figure. According to Saville, Pickles is a serial delusional gambler who lives in the thrall of the "shifty shadow" that he also calls "the hairy hand of God" (Disc 1, 9:53). Pickles, shortly after a successful flutter at the races, reveals his larrikin spirit and confides in Lester Lamb, "there's two other things people say are worth believing in – the Labor Party and God, but they're a bit on the iffy side for my money" (Winton 102). Pickles's gambling is not seen merely as a personal shortcoming but as representing an amorphous spectre-like creature. This notion is endorsed by Winton's use of a striking description of a two-up game that Pickles is enthralled by:

> from above, the two-up circle looks like a sea creature, some simple hungry organism in the water of the night. A sea anemone whose edges rise and fall as bodies press and spread with two glittering morsels turning and dangling in its maw (271).

His gambling addiction can be seen as inseparable from the archetypal larrikin laconic demeanour that signals a contemptuousness of conformity, authority and societal conventions (Bellanta 194). Pickles's irresponsibility as a family man and provider may be unpalatable to contemporary audiences but it can be contextualised within the relational, and evolving framework of hegemonic masculinities. Raewyn Connell and James W. Messerschmidt assert that, "masculinities are configurations of practice that are accomplished in social action and, therefore, can differ according to the gender relations

in a particular social setting" (836). The problematic status of the larrikin as a family man provides an opportunity to scrutinise this.

Three of the larrikins examined in this chapter, Mick Dundee in *Crocodile Dundee*, Mick Taylor in *Wolf Creek 2* and Steve Karamitsis in *The Wog Boy* conform to the traditional depiction of the larrikin who is represented as being free from the shackles of domesticity and as a man who eschews fatherhood. Elder supports this, claiming that, "men have been understood as being invisible or absent as fathers" (86). In *Muriel's Wedding,* the larrikin battler of Bill Heslop is a narcissistic tyrant who abjures any responsibility for the welfare of his family. The film suggests that his decision to marry and sire children relates more to his political ambition to be seen as a battler, which typically in twentieth century Australia, necessitates the encumbrance of family life. In *Australia*, the character of The Drover communicates an exemplary embodiment of larrikinism which is far removed from its historical and cultural origin. The Drover, who values freedom and abhors domesticity and conformity finds himself in the role of a father for the Aboriginal boy, Nullah, as part of the film's narrative. Such an outcome is conjoined with the reconciliatory/utopian politics of the film that advocate an inclusive coexistence of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

As enacted by the characters mentioned above, the larrikin myth requires men to perform a certain socially-condoned type of masculinity that is centred on the notion of egalitarian Australian-ness through the deployment of Australian colloquialisms, a broad Australian accent and a gruff way of speaking. Interestingly enough, all six larrikin figures explored in this chapter are not idealised embodiments of fatherhood and this disparity between larrikinism and fatherhood is a topic that can be analysed by future researchers. The next section of this chapter explores the darker, less desirable, elements of the

larrikin myth and how this can lead to the oppression, belittlement and demise of others especially in the works of P. J. Hogan and Greg McLean.

The director P. J. Hogan explores the fatuousness of Australian life in his successful 1994 film *Muriel's Wedding* and, as part of this, presents a searing attack on the typical Australian larrikin male, as depicted through the father of the titular heroine, Bill Heslop. Paul Byrnes suggests, "Bill Hunter's blustering patriarch is one of Australian cinema's most acerbically awful characters" ("Curator's Notes: *Muriel*" par. 3). The film's exploration of the dark side of larrikinism is part of a subtle aspect of adaptation studies that Linda Hutcheon identifies as "repetition without replication" (28) used to highlight the proliferation of familiar tropes, and/or cinematic techniques in diverse texts that are used as a type of cinematic narrative shorthand. In the case of this particular film, the casting of Hunter is integral in helping the audiences understand his character because as a non-transformational actor, his portrayal of Heslop recalls for the audience many of his previous roles.[24] According to Benjamin Preiss, Hunter with his distinct Australian accent is an actor "known for his frequent characterisations of the archetypal gruff but lovable Australian bloke" (par. 3). Ronald Bergan, similarly notes that Hunter often portrays the "archetypal ocker, an uncultivated Australian working man who enjoys beer, 'barbies', Aussie rules football and V8 supercars" (par. 1). He adds that Hunter, as a star, "defined a certain kind of Ozness," which, I propose corresponds to the notion of gesturality as defined by Susan Hayward in *Key Concepts in Cinema Studies* (1996). The enactment of the larrikin male by Bill Hunter that includes physicality, intonation, a broad Australian accent, postures and the propensity to call all men 'mate' is already a

[24] The term transformational actors, such as Cate Blanchett, describes those accomplished actors who are capable of totally transforming themselves according to the dictates of respective roles. This includes altering their appearance, voice, accent, and sometimes, their gender. As a result of this, audiences cannot rely on gesturality as a way of appreciating a new character.

familiar trope to Australian audiences through his participation in milestone films such as *Newsfront* (1978), *Gallipoli* and *Strictly Ballroom*. Hayward argues that, "gestural codes even more than narrative codes are deeply rooted in a nation's culture" (170) which corroborates Hutcheon's proposal that actors, too, can be considered as adapters (81).

In the film, the character of Heslop is a tyrannical Alpha male whose charm and deviousness were not sufficient to propel him into State Parliament, confining him instead to the town's council chambers. As an alderman, he is not above favouritism, "In Porpoise Spit you had to stay on the right side of Bill Heslop. He gave you favours if you were a mate and hell if you weren't" (Midlam 18). Throughout the film, Heslop belittles and castigates his wife and five children for their lack of progress and achievement without considering the part he has played in shaping their attitudes and cultural practices. He delegates the task of nurturing and rearing his underachieving children to

Fig. 6. Betty Heslop's imminent demise is foreshadowed in this poignant screenshot from *Muriel's Wedding* directed by P. J. Hogan (1:17:06).

his hapless wife whose depression, partly as a result of her marital despondency, appears to have driven her into a catatonic state, as indicated by the depiction of his wife's anagnorisis, suggested by Fig. 6. Here the close-up on Betty, played by Jeannie Dryden, in the foreground of the image, communicates not only her despondency but also her bitter realisation that she will always be at the mercy of men such as her callous husband and the police officers, shown in the background of the image.

The megalomaniacal and vain Heslop, whose "ego was like a battleship" (Midlam 23), is admired by sycophants, including Leo Higgins, who implores Muriel, during Tanya's wedding, to tell her father that, "he is a great man – the best council president this town's ever had" (Midlam 7). Such an obsequious platitude demonstrates how a man's performance of his masculinity needs to be enacted in the homosocial company of other men as well as to by authorised by them.

Heslop's relationship and association with the land also demonstrate the malevolent manifestation of the archetypal Australian larrikin male. Traditionally, larrikin figures such as Dundee and the protagonists of the poems of Henry Lawson and 'Banjo' Paterson, have always enjoyed a symbiotic relationship with the Australian bush and, Heslop, who grew up on a farm, is no exception. Throughout the film, Heslop is an embodiment of the coastal remoteness of Porpoise Spit which stands in opposition to the bush and the Outback, the natural habitats of the archetypal larrikin. This is metonymically reiterated in the film's last frame when the gaze of both Muriel and Rhonda falls on the road sign farewelling visiting drivers from Porpoise Spit. The town's motto "You Can't Stop Progress" (1:37:00), seen at the bottom of this tawdry road sign, was in fact Heslop's political slogan when he unsuccessfully contested a seat at the State election. This modern larrikin has not only eschewed the natural world but is a corrupt

philandering councilman who is selling crown land, including pristine rainforest, to Japanese developers, and is evicting the Aboriginal custodians of these lands in the process.

The film's depiction of the larrikin Australian male becomes sharper due to its polysemous status as an adaptation. *Muriel's Wedding* can be considered both as a transposition, because Amanda Midlam has not deviated from the narrative exposition of the film in her filmic novelisation, but also an analogy because the film echoes Steele Rudd's *Dad and Dave* stories (1895). The fathers in both texts view their children as another burden they need to endure and are negligent towards them. The Heslop and Rudd children, but particularly the eldest male in each text, Dave and Perry respectively, are intellectually, emotionally and socially deficient. The contestation for power between father and daughter is suggested by Fig. 7 that presents the titular heroine as confined in

Fig. 7. Muriel is literarily imprisoned by the patriarchal control and oppression as exercised by her father in the company of men. His hegemonic status is suggested here by how he refers to the young police officers as 'boys' (08:12).

the background and at the mercy of patriarchal power. Tom O' Regan observes *Muriel's Wedding*:

> updated a tradition of Australian storytelling centring on the antics of a daggy family featuring strong father/daughter relations and mentally defective siblings – the archetypal Rudd family story retold this time in a coastal city and contemporary context" (39).

The DVD cover of *Dad and Dave: On Our Selection*, directed by George Whaley in 1995, describes the film as a, "loud, proud, fair dinkum yarn about the original great Aussie battlers, the Rudds an unconventional farming family of charming half-wits." This can fittingly describe the shenanigans of the Helsop family, as seen in *Muriel's Wedding*. During a scene at the Chinese restaurant in the local League club, the audience sees the tyrannical and repressive Heslop revealed as "a terrible father and an adulterous husband" (Quinn 26). But for sycophants like Leo, he is still, "Bill the Battler. Cos he's a little Aussie battler" (Midlam 83). Without a skerrick of humility, Heslop concurs, "been battling all me life" (27:02).

Heslop's final self-realisation and assumption of responsibility at the end of *Muriel's Wedding* signals that he no longer enjoys the privileges of hegemonic masculinity that includes power, authority and wealth and is forced to assume the mantle of 'motherhood' when this is rejected by his daughter Muriel. O' Regan observes that this occurs cinematically amidst the burnt-out backyard, which was the last act of his oppressed wife before her suicide (248). At the dénouement of the film, Heslop has lost his wife, his lover and also, more importantly, his hegemonic status. His assumption of responsibility

for his four unruly children is a demonstration that in the homosocial zone of men, Heslop is now uncoded as a man.

Wolf Creek 2, using the tropes of the horror film, also explores the archetypal figure of the larrikin. In his analysis of *Wolf Creek* (2005) Anthony Gardner informs the reader that the three teenagers, whose torture and slaying become the focus of the film, are initially rescued:

> by the macho equivalent of the hooker-with-a-heart-of-gold: that is, the larrikin bushman with his rough-hewn exterior and softly hospitable persona, an all-too-familiar staple from nineteenth-century bush ballads by Banjo Paterson or Henry Lawson, or the crocodile-hunter franchises of Paul Hogan and Steve Irwin (1-2).

Mick Taylor is, and one cannot underestimate the significance of his likeness to the other Mick (Dundee), an idealised construction for the audience who want to believe in the power of the rural idyll.

Jessica Balanzategui suggests that the *Wolf Creek* films revel in the nightmarish underside to the myths of rural idyll, mateship and charming ockerism that have become so central to our ideas of national identity. To verify Mick Taylor's larrikin status, the film painstakingly constructs him as an archetypal ocker. In the film's opening sequence Taylor is listening to Slim Dusty and, unsurprisingly, the first word he utters in this scene is "G'day" (00:03:50). During the course of the film he unleashes a swathe of Australian idiomatic, colloquial and lurid expressions including "struth no" (00:04:44), "don't get your knickers in a knot, mate" (00:22:41), and "all this bloody saltbush around here is dry as a nun's nasty" (00:46:31). Dave Hoskin observes, "Mick's more blatant ockerisms have more of a whiff of a deliberate performance about them" (22), which is affirmed by

the fact that he is whistling "Waltzing Matilda", Australia's unofficial national anthem, as he heads to the police vehicle, armed with a petrol canister in order to incinerate it in the film's grisly opening scene.[25] Taylor even repeats the greeting spoken by another famous larrikin, The Drover in Luhrmann's *Australia,* with the addition of an expletive, "welcome to Australia, cocksucker" (00:46:31). Taylor's unabashed use of the Australian idiom reaches its apotheosis in his lair where he forces his captive, English tourist Paul, played by Ryan Corr, to participate in an Australian history and culture quiz in order to appease his jingoistic pride. This scene, described as "torture porn meets Banjo Paterson with a game show twist" (Buckmaster par. 7) establishes Taylor's anti-establishment worldview when he shouts at Paul "I hate that fucking song" (1:12:00) as the captive tries to sing "Advance Australia Fair". Taylor is more comfortable joining his hostage in a rendition of Rolf Harris's jingoistic "Tie Me Kangaroo Down", a song that details the last wishes of a dying stockman in the Australian Outback.[26]

Mick Taylor both encapsulates and parodies the figure of the larrikin routinely described as a mythical bush archetype of, according to Gemma Blackwood, a "stereotypical ideal of the hypermasculine 'Aussie Bloke' (492)". According to Simon Abrams, Taylor is "a hateful parody of the chauvinism inherent in Paul Hogan's *Crocodile Dundee* character." Taylor refers to himself as "pig-shooter and general fuckin' Outback legend" (1:14:36). The latter, self-referential comment acknowledges the mythic prototype that has forged the construction of the character in a knowing way. His adept use of the shotgun could be attributed not only to the mythical presumption that all Outback men are adept with firearms, but possibly his experience in the Vietnam War. Taylor's status as a veteran is inseparable from the reception of the Anzac warrior which occupies such an exalted

[25] According to the National Library of Australia.
[26] Harris's song is an adaptation of the 1905 poem, "The Dying Stockman" by Banjo Paterson.

position in the Australian psyche and will be analysed fully in the next chapter. He concedes in *Wolf Creek* that he conceived the "head on a stick" idea from that conflict, whilst in this latest instalment he is seen practising an expert gun drill after callously murdering the character Lil.

The natural habitat of the larrikin, the Outback, has been ubiquitously depicted in colonial texts but also in more recent screen adaptations, such as *Wake in Fright* (1971), *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, *Evil Angels* as well as the *Mad Max* (1979-2015) franchise, as a place of violence and mystery, but also as a preternatural place. The otherworldliness of the Outback as a symbolic manifestation of white Australian collective guilt over the usurpation of Aboriginal land that commenced in colonial times, has been commented on by authoritative literary critics including Elizabeth Webby (52) and is also acknowledged by historian Peter Pierce in *The Country of Lost Children* (1999) where he appraises the anxieties of white settlers not belonging to the land. Gemma Blackwood in her analysis of *Wolf Creek* suggests that texts set in the Outback, particularly the ones that utilise gothic tropes, "emphasise the corrupting dangers of the alien Australian landscape" (490). Delys Bird in *The Oxford Literary History of Australia* (2000) acknowledges this ambivalent relationship between the larrikin and his Outback landscape as a contrast between good and evil by referring to "its potential for brutal oppression and corruption as well as for individual liberty and heroism" (31-32). The Outback is the zone that has nurtured such exalted figures as Archy Hamilton in *Gallipoli* and the titular character from *The Man from Snowy River* and fostered the undeniable mateship between shearers in *Sunday Too Far Away;* is also the otherworldly zone in *Picnic at Hanging Rock* and the natural habitat of the psychopath Mick Taylor.

The *Wolf Creek* films are loosely based on the Ivan Milat murders that took place in the New South Wales Belanglo Forest, but Greg McLean "relocated the story to the Outback, to bring in a sense of the landscape, both the beauty and the terror" (Byrnes "Wolf Creek"). This is an astute decision because the notion of the Outback as a menacing avenging power has been an uncomfortable presence in Australian literature since colonial times. Cinematographer Toby Oliver includes a number of shots in both films that suggest Taylor is conjoined with the nightmare version of the Outback he inhabits. He demonstrates a knowledge of all its nuances as he informs the hapless British victim, Paul, "the first rule of the Outback, you never ever stop" (1:06:18).

The audience in *Wolf Creek 2* is provided with only one sequence that does not involve Taylor but this is a telling one: a nocturnal panoramic shot of Sydney to the sounds of Steppenwolf's "Born to be Wild". Seen from the perspective of Taylor, whose point of view dominates the film, the juxtaposition between the two settings is odious. The contrast between the Outback, the natural habitat of the larrikin, and the coastal landscape of Australia, where the men were once considered to be physically weaker, less independent and resourceful, is instructive in the enactment of the hegemonic masculinities framework. McLean's film parodies hegemonic power that was traditionally wielded by embodiments of the Outback, such as Dundee, but now rests within the highly educated, intuitive and resourceful young men of the middle classes. The success of the AFC genre instilled in Australian audiences a perception that the Outback was irrevocably connected to pioneering and colonial myths, including the embodiment of masculinity in the Outback larrikin. Contemporary films set in earlier times, acknowledge the problems associated with an Outback life, such as racism and violence, which can be witnessed even in nostalgic 'feel-good' adaptations including *The Sapphires* and *Red Dog*.

Such openness towards acknowledging the social problems of the past resonate well with contemporary audiences, as evident in the box-office success of both films.

The first image we see in *Wolf Creek 2* is close-up of a dilapidated *Golden Fleece* billboard, an Australian oil company which was founded in the turbulent 1890s and lasted for nearly a century before its amalgamation with Caltex in 1981. Culturally, the closing decade of the nineteenth century recalled in *Wolf Creek 2*, was known for its radicalism and nascent nationalism that produced the Australian literary icons of Patterson and Lawson. This new pride in Australian identity, however, disseminated by such writers as Mary Gilmore and Vance Palmer and others, was also characterised by a rising sentiment of racism and xenophobia towards the ethnic minorities who had come to Australia following the Gold Rush. This toxic mixture of nationalism and xenophobia is integral to understanding the character of Taylor, who, film reviewer Paul Byrnes proposes, is "a virulent, psychopathic reaction to the 'invasion' of Australia's 19th-century idea of itself, a son of the pioneers turned feral" (par. 4). Taylor's version of Australia is inward

Fig. 8. One of the final shots in *Wolf Creek 2* shows its sadistic protagonist, Mick Taylor, merging with his natural milieu, the malevolent Outback. (1:47:43)

looking and insular, totally devoid of any Indigenous markings or presence located in "the terrain of rural horror" (Scott and Biron 318).

The demonisation of the larrikin figure depicted in McClean's films through the character of Taylor, can be seen as resonant of the horrors associated with patriarchal white society at the expense of minorities, as suggested by Gemma Blackwood (495). This larrikin figure becomes even more unpalatable because it is now connected with the irrational fear that the Outback exerts on the national psyche. The representation of the Australian larrikin archetype in the *Wolf Creek* films is not far removed from the type of amoral and graphic horror favoured by Jacobean dramatists, such as John Webster, or modern cinema auteurs, such as George A. Romero, who first coined the term 'splatter films.' Gardner observes that *Wolf Creek*'s menacing protagonist "dissolves into the desert landscape at the film's close" (4) which is repeated in its sequel, as shown in Fig. 8. It suggests that the evil encapsulated by Taylor will not be vanquished, unless audiences become more critical of the detrimental dimensions of national archetypes and the role they play in upholding normative understandings of power. Similarly, Alexandra Heller-Nicholas proposes in *Overland*, that "McLean has made a film that revels in the visceral muck of what we are becoming; what is on screen reflects the horror being played out in the nation's name, from Canberra to Manus Island" (par. 10). She concludes by claiming that as the latest incarnation of the archetypal larrikin, Taylor embodies Australia's "monstrous white masculinity" (par. 12).

The toxic portrayal of the larrikin in *Wolf Creek 2* can be counterbalanced by the depiction of the larrikin as an embodiment of inclusive masculinity which has been gaining currency in the 2000s through texts such as *The Wog Boy* and *Australia*. Notably this inclusive form of masculinity is indistinguishable from multiculturalism and

reconciliatory politics. Briefly, in *The Wog Boy* directed by Aleksi Vellis, Steve Karamitsis, played by Nick Giannopoulos, possesses an ebullient personality and high energy which can inspire others, as shown by the reactions of the non-'wog' characters in the film. Despite his seemingly parochial lifestyle, including his fetishistic adulation of his 1969 Holden Valiant Regal, a metonym for his energy and sexuality, his moral compass is finely tuned to such archetypal Australian values as mateship, loyalty, and a fair go. For Karamitsis, his vintage car is part of the tradition of male muscle cars that represents constancy in his life and becomes the central focus of his socialising. The power of the vehicle, particularly its ability to cause injury if not driven properly, harks back to colonial times and to the symbiotic relationship between Outback stockmen and their horses. It symbolises "the attainment of adult masculinity with the testing of ability and physical prowess" (Stevens K. 232). Karamitsis's attitude to life and his distrust of authority is indubitably Lawsonian in its scope, demonstrated by his confident rapprochement with the Minister of Employment: "Well, on behalf of myself and the other 799,000 unemployed, you're doing a great fucking job" (10:55). His confidence and refusal to be intimidated by more privileged members of society, demonstrated in the dinner scene with Australia's seven most formidable business tycoons, as well as in his interactions with media figure, Derryn Hinch, identify him as an archetypal Australian larrikin.[27]

In a similar vein, the representation of The Drover in Baz Luhrmann's *Australia*, as played by Hugh Jackman, is at once both a homage and a challenge to the archetypal figure of the larrikin, which started to enjoy cultural currency in colonial times, when more than eighty per cent of the population in the Outback were men (Ward 94). The representation of the character of The Drover is congruent with Connell's assertion that

[27] The former journalist Mr Hinch, who was elected as Senator for Victoria in the 2016 Federal election, plays himself in the film.

hegemonic masculinity can only be understood as a relational concept, particularly in how he relates to the mythic figure of the bushman, his relationship with the Outback and his intrapersonal relations with others, especially with men.

In *Gender, Race and National Identity* (2009), Jackie Hogan asserts that men, male iconography and masculine pursuits such as droving have been synonymous with being Australian. The character of young Harry Dale in the original Lawson poem "The Ballad of the Drover", one of the hypotexts for Luhrmann's text, loses his name in the hypertext but remains, nonetheless, consistent with the core image Australians had of themselves in colonial times. Hogan proposes that the core icons of Australianness and their various filmic incarnations are "still white men: the stockman, the digger, the larrikin, the sportsman, the bushranger" (Hogan 65). When the audience of *Australia* first encounters The Drover, he embodies all the qualities and cultural markings one associates with hegemonic masculinity: he is rugged, muscular laconic, handsome, resourceful, and loyal. The definite article associated with the name, The Drover, identifies the intentioned mythical stature that is enjoyed by this archetypal character and his "heroic masculinity". It is a signal to the audience that his depiction is beyond the realm of naturalism and that it is both intertextual and panegyric. Indeed, it fetishises "Australian manhood" (Hogan 63).

Like all other larrikins, The Drover is active and comfortable in his own skin, unabashed by his use of the Australian vernacular that is part of his working-class origin and ethos. This, contrasts markedly to the speech of other ineffectual and feminised men such as Territory administrator, Allsop. In fact, The Drover considers it his patriotic duty to eschew the formality associated with grandiose figures. Even though Nullah's journey for identity is at the core of the film's ideology, it is the figure of the mythic Drover who

Fig. 9. The Drover's physique is exhibited in this screenshot from *Australia*, directed by Baz Luhrmann. Particularly interesting is the collocation of the colour of his R. M. Williams costume with the colour of the land, reinforcing the notion that he belongs to the land.

initiates all the physical action, affirming the legendary communal perception of the bushman "as the founding force of Australia" (Papson 'White Narrative' par. 4). The Drover's status as an itinerant worker is presented as part of his desire to be his own man and to be free from the shackles of dependency, demonstrated when he informs Lady Ashley "no man hires me, no man fires me" (1:22:10). As shown in Fig. 9., his identity as The Drover embodies an affinity with the land and suggests an indigenous notion of what one's relationship with the land ought to be: to live with and not try to subjugate it.

Jackie Hogan observes that The Drover represents a "distinctively Australian hero. Part the Man from Snowy River, part Mick Dundee, he is a stockman, a bushman and a war hero rolled into one" (67), a theme reiterated in "The Drover's Ballad" heard during the film's credits where the lyrics reinforce the story: "his legend rode the winds from Broome to Darwin". The Drover is a solitary white figure, celebrated in the poems of Lawson and the stories of Paterson, living and working in the northern region of Australia in the Outback area around Kununurra in far northern Western Australia, close to the border with the Northern Territory. The Drover personifies "the Outback myth of self-sufficient masculinity" (Cook 131) which the film suggests must be brought into the realm of social responsibility by transforming The Drover into a father figure and family man. Like his literary working-class and filmic larrikin antecedents The Drover remains an Anti-Establishment figure, stridently opposed to institutions and their oppressiveness. He informs Lady Ashley, when the latter attempts to enlist his help with leading the cattle drive to Darwin: "I learned a long time ago not to fight other people's wars" (39:01). What convinces him to assist her is not so much her *damsel in distress* predicament but rather that her plight is a result of a miscarriage of justice, which

corresponds with the sense of a 'fair go', a value to which The Drover adheres.[28] His abhorrence for material possession is another facet that connects him to archetypal larrikin figures, perhaps mirroring perceived Aboriginal values. In a moment of poignancy, he informs Lady Ashley that:

> most people like to own things. You know, land, luggage, other people. Makes them feel secure. But all that can be taken away. And in the end, the only thing you really own is your story. Just tryin' to live a good one (12:35).

Hugh Jackman underwent a gruelling physical training regime to transform his body, known for its leanness and agility, into a densely muscular vehicle suitable for portraying an archetypal larrikin Australian stockman. He is aided in this by the costumes of Catherine Martin. Pam Cook, in her book on Baz Luhrmann (part of the *BFI World Directors* series) reports that The Drover's costumes are based on real costumes from the R. M. Williams archives and consist of moleskin trousers, check shirt and the distinctive Akubra hat. Different variations on this basic attire were constructed to compliment the physical attributes of Jackman and geared "towards emphasising his athletic physique" (129). The athleticism, charm and relaxed swagger that Jackman utilises for his character are all essential in his portrayal of The Drover as an homage to such a mythic cultural and historical stereotype. Such a figure of white masculinity, "toughened by Australian landscapes", Stephen Papson suggests, "permeates Australian national identity" ("White" par. 2). The Drover's mythical status is cinematically verified by the provision of his own musical leitmotif which is a mixture of 'The Drover's Ballad' and strains from 'Waltzing Matilda'.

[28] or 'a fair crack of the whip' which literally occurs repeatedly throughout the film.

Fig. 10. Hugh Jackman's physique is flaunted in this nocturnal scene from *Australia* (13: 50). The scene is an intertextual homage to the 'Solo' man advertisements and reminiscent of Hollywood western films.

The character of The Drover is congruent with the much loved and celebrated figure of the archetypal larrikin and serves the film's ideological context and Luhrmann's Reconciliation agenda. As an ANZAC fighter, who has survived the war, The Drover is an embodiment of the modern, inclusive, Australian nation. Since the character was created in a post-Mabo era, following the Rudd apology to Indigenous Australians, The Drover espouses the essence of reconciliation and a rejection of fervent nationalism.[29] His admission that he is unwilling to involve himself in wars that do not affect his country directly is because he proudly views himself as Australian and not English. This

[29] The Prime Minister's official apology to Australia's Aboriginal people is included in the film's endtitles.

stance enjoys extra resonance because of its intertextual reference to similar sentiments of Frank Dunne in Weir's *Gallipoli*, Australia's sacred text.[30]

This binary opposition can be further appreciated in terms of gender politics where England is routinely identified as feminine; The Drover condescendingly refers to England as "mother England" whilst as Martin Crotty argues in *Making the Australian Male: Middle-Class Masculinity* (2001) Australia, is consistently imagined in terms of a masculine identity. Despite being a white Australian, The Drover has suffered from the stigma and ostracism that is reserved for Aboriginal Australians. As part of the film's backstory we are told that he had previously been married to a young Aboriginal woman who had died when she was refused medical treatment for tuberculosis due to racist attitudes. "The Drover's Ballad" provides details about his marriage which in the early part of the century would still be thought of as reason for exclusion: "For when the drover gave his heart to a girl whose skin was dark, from that day on he was no white man's friend". The Drover's relationships with Aboriginal characters in the film are respectful, particularly his association with Magarri, his former brother-in-law who is not only his best mate but, in terms of cinema language, is also the trusted sidekick of the 'western hero'. The Drover is ambivalent about his own social status. He notes that he is "as good as black to that mob up there, I mix with dingoes not duchesses" (1:22:26) and he becomes a kind of anthropological guide for Lady Ashley, explaining the nuanced cultural customs and behaviour of the local Aboriginal people to her. The Drover's espousal of hybridity is also evident in his desire to breed an English thoroughbred horse

[30] Peter Cochrane observes that the viewing of ANZAC is part of "the obstinate or perhaps eternal need for the sacred in a secular society" (par 23).

with an Australian bush brumby, and this becomes analogous throughout the film of his own relationship with Lady Ashley.

It can be argued that the privileges and manifestation of hegemonic masculinity can only exist in contrast to the masculinities enacted by other men whose performances illuminate the more desirable traits of the larrikin drover. Darwin's effete Administrator (Barry Otto) is an example of complicit masculinity because he is easily controlled by other more strong-willed males such as King Carney and, later, Fletcher. Carney (Bryan Brown) represents the privileged patriarchal order and his broad Australian accent is suited to an economic hegemon in charge of a monopoly. His status is codified visually by the over-sized beer bottles he consumes as well as by his name.[31] Carney's henchmen, particularly Fletcher, are intimidated and forced to do his bidding in a patriarchal enactment of one-upmanship. At one juncture, he demonstrates his disappointment in Fletcher when he admonishes him, "that's what happens when you send a boy to do a man's job" (1:19:36). In the film, Carney is a representative of uber-hegemonic masculinity which is associated with ruthless commerce. Stephen Papson supports this by drawing attention to Carney's role as a ruthless businessman and profiteer ("National" par. 1.) Carney's insatiable appetite for land acquisition is to the detriment of the Aboriginal inhabitants who are displaced and rendered powerless because of his ruthless actions.

Kipling Flynn, played by Jack Thompson, enjoys a marginalised hegemonic status as his alcoholism renders him a figure of pathos who cannot exercise resolve over his own actions. It is only in the presence of a more powerful male, The Drover, that Flynn forswears his dependency on rum and regains his decency and dignity, evident in his

[31] The name of this beef baron is a playful pun on the French word for meat.

sagacious advice to Lady Ashley to "continue to do what your husband set out to do, drove. Drove the cattle to Darwin" (31:33). The character of Fletcher, the film's antagonist, is played by David Wenham. According to Liz McNavin, he is "like a hungry ghost with an unquenchable appetite. Fletcher hungers for power and status" (par. 5). Fletcher displays his homicidal and filicidal propensity through his villainous acting style approximating the archetypal pantomime figure, dressed as he is in a black suit.

Fletcher is a delusional character who feels a sense of entitlement. He tells Lady Ashley: "my family worked this property for three generations. My father died making people like you rich. Faraway Downs belongs to me" (1:40:13). He is associated with the hegemonic power of King Carney but throughout much of the film he is subservient to Carney because he is financially dependent on him. On a more literal level, Fletcher's job as 'first henchman' is to 'fletch' the King's weapons, as observed by Morton (162). The portrayal of Fletcher, whose crocodile boots are featured prominently in several scenes, appears rather reptilian and malicious in nature. By debunking the conventional charm of the archetypal larrikin through aligning the 'Crocodile' identity with the racist attitudes of Fletcher, the director is highlighting the positive inclusivity displayed by Fletcher's nemesis, The Drover.

The privileged point of view in the film is that of Nullah, the young Aboriginal boy, and as such, all perceptions of what is enacted on the screen must be seen through this prism. For Nullah, who lives in a world where myths and legends are real, The Drover is the embodiment of rugged masculinity. His name alone signals his independence and legendary status. The custody battle over the boy becomes allegorical in the film as an epic combat of conflicting masculinities. Fletcher wants to obliterate his mixed-ancestry progeny whereas The Drover wants to nurture, support and love the child. In this

patriarchal enactment of fatherhood and paternalism the liberal views of The Drover are juxtaposed with the colonial views of genocide. The Drover restores order in the life of the young man by insisting that he is initiated in the cultural traditions of his kin, otherwise he will not belong to either community. The hegemonic order which pits The Drover at its uppermost echelons, demands that a series of other men, who contest this hegemonic power, including Flynn, Magarri, and Fletcher must die before The Drover can assume his parental duty and nurture Nullah. A more inclusive masculinity is evident by the end of the film, where The Drover affirms his commitment to his new family with Sarah Ashley and Nullah but without losing his "hegemonic Australian masculinity," as Jackie Hogan observes ("Gendered Discourses" 67). The Drover may have settled down to a life of domesticity with his new family, but his unshaven appearance, clothes and physiognomy all continue to be codes signifying his unquestionably rugged masculinity. In this way, as proposed by Papson, the film also evidences the desire to rewrite the Australian national mythology, in which landscape, bushman, and Indigeneity come together to form a national multicultural identity (par. 1).

*

This chapter has interrogated the venerated archetype of the larrikin which is synonymous with the bushman figure. It has explained how the figure of the larrikin is indistinguishable from the working-class battler and how its proliferation and popularity marks it as a revered archetype that is synonymous with being Australian. By examining different manifestations of this enduring figure within the timespan of forty years, I have argued that even an archetypal figure, such as the larrikin, is an accretion of prevailing ideologies of society at specific historical junctures. The forty-year span utilised in the thesis captures these historical shifts in the depiction of the larrikin. Collectively, all these

contrasting representations suggest that all forms of idealised masculinity are organic and capable of being revised according to changing mores and socio-cultural and economic conditions in a particular society. Likewise, the next chapter will examine another venerated embodiment of Australian masculinity as witnessed through the espousal of mateship and will illustrate that the sacrosanct realm of mateship is far from being a monolithic phenomenon. It, too, is subject to change according to economic, social, cultural and political prevailing conditions.

Chapter 3

The mateship paradox

The depiction of mateship in Australian screen adaptations suggests that it is an essential element of dominant masculinity, particularly its associated traits of loyalty, stoicism, dependability and group belonging, all of which are elements of the egalitarian spirit in Australia. Catriona Elder argues that egalitarianism has been a key trope in Australian culture and storytelling, rendering "social and economic divisions" invisible (41). I am arguing that mateship, as enacted in numerous screen adaptations, is an exalted and unique manifestation of masculinity in Australia which, as Kirsten Stevens reminds us, "has achieved a romanticised status akin to national identity since its early development within the bushman and Anzac mythology" (233).

Screen adaptations between 1975 and 2015, illustrate the desirability of being a mate by other men, which supports the supposition that the performance of masculinity can only be viewed as a relational construct. In Raewyn Connell's formulation of the hegemonic masculinity framework, hegemonic masculinity is used to perpetuate "the legitimacy of patriarchy" (*Masculinities* 77), entrenching, disseminating, and reinforcing certain enactments of masculinity whilst alienating, marginalising and demonising others. It communicates a preference for one type of masculinity over others, particularly excoriating the performance of masculinity that approximates femininity. Dean Lusher and Garry Robbins endorse this proposition, commenting, "the innovativeness of Connell's theory is its focus on gender as a relational construct rather than as a categorical conceptualization" (22).

Ironically though, as much as mateship is pursued as an ideal on the regional level for Australian men, it does not provide them with the desired patriarchal dividend that can be gained through being associated with hegemonic masculinity. According to Amanda Laugesen, the use of distinctive Australian slang and the word mate, "helped to forge a bond that in the years after WWI fed into a distinctive national myth which emphasised mateship, masculinity and other values that had been forged on the battlefield" (par. 35).

The term mate itself has become the default greeting between males in Australia. Speaking in 1999, the then Prime Minister John Howard insisted that mateship was a hallowed Australian word and wished to include a reference to it in the Australian Constitution. Nick Dyrenfurth, adds:

> for a nation sceptical of spiritual dogma and ideological doctrine, mateship has acted the part of a de facto religion. Mateship is, allegedly, part of our collective DNA, or so-called national identity. Compared with our British cousins Australia boasts a distinctive egalitarianism of manners ("Cobbers" par. 10).

Sophie Watson and Rosemary Pringle observe that, "Australia has a long tradition of male mateship and bases its national identity on the doings of these mates" (232). Accordingly, it is generally thought that mateship must be the idealised state of manhood to which men could aspire because "individuals derive beliefs about what is valued within the social system by their perceptions of attitudes generally held by others, especially when they need to negotiate norms and behaviours with others in public" (Lusher & Robbins 24).

Dyrenfurth reiterates that mateship describes "the bonds of loyalty and equality, and feelings of solidarity and fraternity that Australians, usually men, are typically alleged to

exhibit" (*Mateship* 3-4). However, what the screen adaptations examined in this thesis suggest, is that even though the configuration of mateship is unique within the cultural context of Australia and integral to one's identity as an Australian man, mateship alone does not automatically confer hegemonic status on its aspirants. Rather, the status of mateship is repeatedly applied as a compensatory mode to further the interests of the dominant capitalist elite by appearing to be capitulating to the interests and needs of subordinated and marginalised men.

The national story enacted in screen adaptations certainly privileges male patriarchal order and such stories are performed in the company of other men. Both Tom Inglis Moore in *Social Patterns in Australian Literature* (1971) and Russel Ward in *The Australian Legend* argue that mateship was a necessity born out of Australia's convict origins where loyalty to one's fellow convicts was paramount. In the novel, *For the Term of His Natural Life* (1870), for example, the protagonist refuses the possibility of becoming a police constable by telling the chaplain, "and betray my mates? I'm not of that sort" (Clarke 408). The fourth screen adaptation of Marcus Clarke's episodic novel, directed by Rob Stewart in 1982, suggests the idea of mateship was conjoined with the anti-authoritarian and egalitarian spirit which purportedly characterised colonial Australia (Dixon 26). That is, mateship is viewed as resistance to the colonial authority figure that wielded incontestable power over men occupying marginalised positions. This supports Manning Clark's assertion that "material progress and mateship could be [the convicts'] only comforters against earth and sky, man and beast" (*History of Aust. Vol. 5* xv). Ward describes how the bush workers in the Outback have inculcated mateship into the collective psyche, as shown in *Sunday Too Far Away*, where the mob of mates, led by Foley, are willing to forego individual gains by forging a united front to fight the

proletariat interests of the landowners and the government. Such an Australian, played by Jack Thompson, according to Ward,

> swears hard and consistently, gambles heavily and often, and drinks deeply on occasion… He believes that Jack is not only as good as his master but … probably a good deal better. He will stick to his mates through thick and thin, even if he thinks they may be in the wrong (1-2).

Men in close proximity to each other in leisure or hard work, as seen in texts such as *Puberty Blues* (1982), *Devil's Dust*, and *Gallipoli*, reiterate the desirability of mateship in the context of homosociality. This is evident not only in dramas but also in comedies such as *Don's Party* (1976), *The Club* (1980) and *Red Dog*. Albert Moran and Errol Vieth assert that Australian comedies:

> celebrate the nuances of a particular way of Australian life: working-class attitudes and contempt for authority, hedonistic beliefs and practices and a particular form of masculinity which includes loud behaviour, a love of watching sport, a lack of serious consideration of any issue and so on (208).

This description of masculinity, as depicted in these comedies, can be used to denounce the negative aspects associated with homosociality and mateship as depicted in more dramatic adaptations such as *Wake in Fright*, *Blackrock* and *Sunday Too Far Away*.

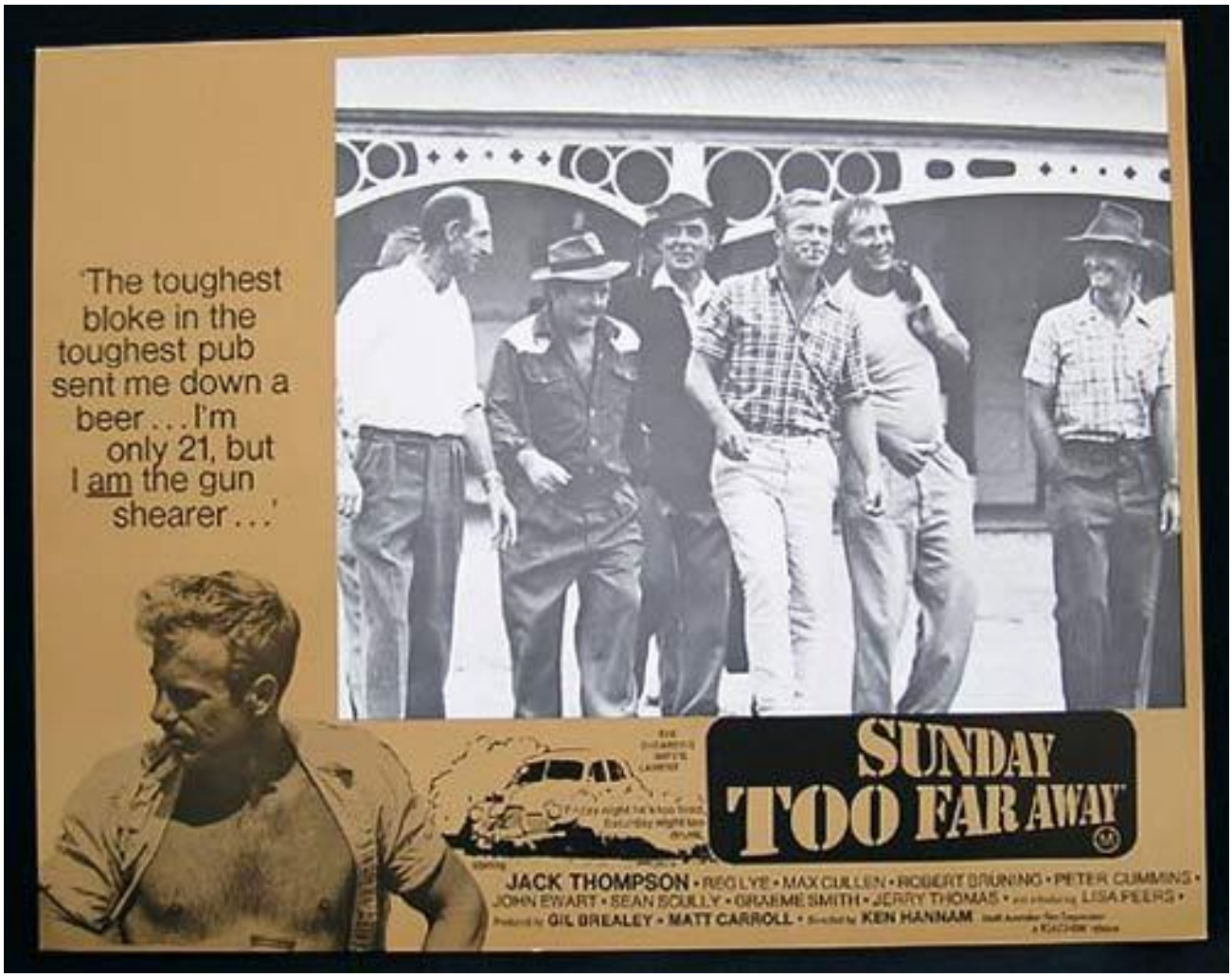

Fig. 11. Original poster for Hannan's *Sunday Too Far Away* illustrating the pivotal nature of homosociality and mateship in the text. It is noteworthy that despite the close proximity of the men in relation to one another, not one is physically touching any other. The costumes worn by all men in this film poster suggest that mateship is related to a working-class ethic. The figure of muscular bare-chested Foley, in the left foreground, reiterates the importance of physicality in gaining the approval and admiration from other men.

Sunday Too Far Away is a culturally significant film in Australia, dealing with codes of masculinity, including the hierarchical positioning of men in an exclusive homosocial zone, as seen in the film's poster (see Fig. 11.). Ken Hannam's critically and commercially successful film is a homage to the pioneer archetypal bloke. Foley's camaraderie with men is reiterated when, by calling for an unprecedented strike, he unites a group of disparate shearers in a fight for better working conditions. Even though in the film

Foley's supremacy as a 'gun shearer' is being challenged by a younger and fitter man, he puts aside his personal goal of maintaining his work status as the gun shearer for the common good of achieving better pay and working conditions for his mates as well as for all other men who might follow in their footsteps. *Sunday Too Far Away* reinforces the recurring notion in Australian literature that mateship is an essential component of survival in a tough environment, in this case the Outback (Webby 252). By implication, mateship is also outlined as an antidote to homoerotic desire – presented strongly in Peter Weir's *Gallipoli* which can be considered as an urtext in Australian cinema due to its continued popularity and influence. Homoeroticism, as evidenced in the screen adaptations examined for this work, is presented as the ultimate act of transgression amongst mates in Australian cinema, television, literature, and popular culture.

The nexus between working-class masculinity and mateship, explicated in *Sunday Too Far Away*, is central to the construction of Australian identity routinely confirmed as a male identity. Candace West and John Zimmerman assert that the construction of gender at the personal level "is not simply an aspect of what one is, but, more fundamentally, it is something that one does, and does recurrently, in interaction with others." (140) This can be elucidated by observing the individual acts performed by men in any number of Australian adaptations between 1975 and 2015 particularly by how they relate to one another through the phenomenon of mateship.

Undoubtedly, the representation of extreme male allegiance, or mateship, as manifested in Australian adaptations, particularly those found during Australia's 'New Wave' cinema, coexists with the dominant understanding of heterosexuality as the social norm in Australian society. Bruce Beresford in his screen adaptation of Kenneth Ross's play, *Breaker Morant*, presents the duality between mateship and masculinity as an unchallenged

component of Australian male identity and utilises this to challenge British class-based masculinity that abided by rules and is portrayed as more disciplined than its Australian counterparts. This is a point worth unpacking further because it is pertinent to the association of working-class identity to mateship. The very normative averageness of working-class masculinity places it at the centre of narratives concerning what it means to be an Australian (Whitman 52). Mateship, as shown in nearly all contemporary screen adaptations since 1975, is irrefutably an exalted state in the homosocial zone of men. Working-class masculinity, as seen in *Breaker Morant*, may not occupy a dominant position within Australian society in general, but it does occupy a highly legitimising one, as suggested by Christine Beasley (*Rethinking* 94).

This fusion of working-class ethos and mateship is used routinely in screen texts to uphold the myth of an egalitarian society. The actions of the Australian soldiers in *Breaker Morant* were characteristically mischievous and typical of larrikins who did not abide by the rigidity of institutions, shown for example by their referring to their superiors by their first names and only saluting those officers they liked or respected. According to Sergeant-Major Drummit, "the Australians were all irregulars and they didn't take discipline very well." (Ross 40).

The revered status of Australian mateship is best illustrated by Peter Weir's film *Gallipoli* which demonstrates its archetypal depiction as one that embraces loyalty, camaraderie, equality and nationhood. Nearly all characters in Australian screen adaptations between 1975 and 2015 are nominally Christians, even though religion as an integral part of Australian identity has been largely sidelined. Filling the void created by the absence of God in secular Australia is the institution of mateship, as attested by *Gallipoli*. Mateship, as a dogma in Australia, has certainly benefitted from its connection to a working-class

ethos that belittles and scolds those who are positioned away from 'being average'. Furthermore, the narratives of 'average' or 'the middle', apart from being linked to the working-class, mark this identity of mateship as 'authentic' (Skeggs 971). This in turn compounds the legitimacy and entitlement tied to working-class masculinity and obfuscates the privileges and hegemonic status of more fortunate Australians such as the Hamiltons in *Gallipoli*. Encouraged by the steady resurgence in public awareness of the significance of the spirit of ANZAC that began with Weir's *Gallipoli* (Daley 45), I am claiming that this film has become an urtext in Australian adaptation studies, relating not only to the Anzac mythology, but also to nationhood itself. Historian Bill Gammage, whose work is acknowledged as a key source in the adaptation of the film, argues that soldiers like Archy Hamilton were convinced that "mateship was a particular Australian virtue, a creed, almost a religion" (112). Part of *Gallipoli*'s enduring legacy can be located in the manner with which it connects Australian masculinity and mateship with Australian national identity as well as the seamless way it utilises the adaptation process in its construction. The novel of *Gallipoli* (1981) by Jack Bennet must be considered the hypertext in the adaptation process since Weir's film of *Gallipoli* was released earlier. I would argue, however, that this is only partly true since the film was adapted, at least in part, from various other sources, including historical events surrounding the 1915 ANZAC landing at Gallipoli.[32] Through the central relationship of the two young runners, Weir "invokes the Australian masculine stereotype through themes of the Outback, the Bushman, mateship, anti-British sentiments and the irreverent larrikin" (Melksham 41).

[32] The endurance of the film's popularity is partly attributable to the 'truthfulness' of its depiction of events, even though it has been realised in recent years that history is always to some extent a conditional, partial, and inescapably biased account of the past.

In *Gallipoli,* mateship is synonymous with an exemplary masculinity that is reserved for white Australians of British descent. Weir in his film constructs a paean to masculinity; the all-male ensemble provides "exemplary instances of male strength, courage, know-how, cunning, endurance and prowess" (Moran and Vieth 2006 25). Likewise, Tom O'Regan comments that "iconic masculinity has been a privileged marker of a public and collective identity in *Gallipoli* and *Breaker Morant*" (132). Together, Hamilton the idealised bushman and Frank Dunne the affable working-class larrikin embody positive traits associated with Australian masculinity. What Weir achieves in his film is to combine these aspects and endow them with the additional honorary designation of warrior. Tellingly, it is only after the two young men pass a test of masculinity and survival in the Salt Desert that they are permitted to become fully-fledged warriors for their country. This narrative episode is a sound example of how complex the notion of hegemonic masculinity is. David Coad remarks "manhood and nationhood are mutually dependent in this (con)fusing of sexual and national scripts" (107). This collocation between masculinity and nationalism is reinforced throughout the feature film using "Oxygène" by Jean-Michel Jarre playing over the young men's running sequences both during their desert trek and training at Gallipoli. As Daniel Reynaud argues, in his film, Peter Weir has cemented the archetype of the ANZAC fighter as an, "embodiment of the truly male Australian: Anglo-white, heroic, distinguishable from the other of different races and nationalities, and the paragon of the true virtues of mateship and fighting prowess" (120).

The representation of the idealised Australian man is seen primarily through his physicality, prowess, and good looks. Early in the narrative Hamilton is told derisively by an envious indolent farm worker at the Hamilton property that "girls run, men box"

(04:25) but this pugilistic sentiment is dispelled throughout the film because running becomes the motif that connects masculinity and mateship to national sacrifice and pride. Running is the motif that underscores the film's intention and bookends Weir's film. In addition, it pays tribute to Private Wilfred Harper, the real Gallipoli hero, whose fearless running towards the enemy inspired Weir and became the narrative catalyst for his film (Bean 23).

The importance of running can be illustrated by the following screenshots from the film:

Fig. 12. Archy Hamilton practising his running at the commencement of the film, under the supervision of his Uncle Jack. At the outset, running becomes a way of connecting with mateship when Hamilton defends his friendship with the Aboriginal character of Zac: "Zac's my mate. - We run together." (00:02:36)

Fig. 13. During the Trials, the athleticism of Hamilton and Frank Dunne is established during this race, as is their respective admiration for each other. Dunne is introduced as a worthy competitor for Hamilton and the race becomes the catalyst for the emergent mateship between the two men. (00:19:55)

Fig. 14. This run by the two mates towards the great Egyptian monument is a reiteration of their relationship. Here they seal their regard for each other by inscribing their names on the ancient monument in a mock commitment ceremony. The 'unity' of the two men is officially endorsed by Major Barton when he agrees to transfer Dunne to the Light Horse. (1:03:54)

Fig. 15. Dunne's last run at Gallipoli, accompanied by Jarre's score, aims to avert the planned enemy charge. (1:39:10)

Fig. 16. The film's iconic last frame during Hamilton's heroic final run. A resistant reading of the film would see Hamilton's demise as removing the threat of homosexuality and allowing Dunne to return to a more heteronormative status. (1:44:10)

Catriona Elder argues that the reproduction of a narrative reinforcing particular myths of Australianness, "myths that are organised around male homosociality and mateship" (197), is demonstrated by the various bonds of mateship in the film. Dunne, initially Hamilton's competitor but later his best mate, is a city-dweller who is quick-witted, proud, pragmatic and opportunistic. His running prowess is not presented in *Gallipoli* as an idealised exultation of his principles and the pursuit of glory, as is the case with Hamilton, but rather as an economic necessity. Dunne is a forward-thinking figure who sees little value in learning skills and pursuits that clearly will soon become redundant, such as horse-riding. Instead, he is planning to work hard and become involved in newer forms of personal transportation such as bikes and cars. Dunne joins the Infantry because he thinks a successful stint in the army might procure him officer status, which will consequently allow him to use his experience, wages and contacts to establish his post-war business venture. Dunne's cynicism and disrespect for authority is used to counterbalance the naivety of Hamilton.

Eve Kosofky Sedgwick has argued that homosociality sublimates the erotic and Coad confidently asserts that mateship is the Australian equivalent of the homosociality and that it suppresses the potentiality of a sexual association between the two men, Hamilton and Dunne (108). Hamilton is an idealised character who according to Trevor Melksham, is an "allegory for the young Australian nation, longing for the great adventure of mateship that represents the nation's need to prove itself to those who gave it birth" (43). The mateship between the two men is reinforced during their visit to Egypt and is communicated in the novelisation as fraternal:

> He (Archy) and Frank Dunne were slapping each other on the back and shaking hands and jumping around like school-boys and generally behaving in such an

> unmilitary manner that Colonel Robinson, watching disapprovingly through his field glasses, turned to major Barton and said, with considerable exasperation, "I say—what the devil are those men playing at?" Major Barton shrugged. "Looks like two old cobbers just met, sir." The colonel was speechless (Bennett 182).

The two young men also immortalise and formalise their bond of mateship, "they took it in turn to carve their names into the stone. When they had finished, they stood back to admire their work. Next to the names of Napoleon's soldiers was now inscribed: Archy Hamilton. Frank Dunne. A.I.F. April 1915" (186).

A conservative reading of the film would see this signing ceremony as the way by which the two young soldiers poignantly inscribe their names on the ancient tomb of the pyramid to seal their mateship. The only physical action between them consists of a handshake shortly before Hamilton accepts his sacrificial destiny. A more resistant reading, however, would highlight the intimacy of their act and view the next scene, the formal party scene, as a reception of sorts that celebrates their union. A further scene sees the two men sharing a cigarette, which as a classic Hollywood trope, could signify as a post-coital metonym. Additionally, the duet from Lakmé by Léo Delibes in Major Barton's tent is used in the film to reiterate the bond between the two young males. The scriptwriter, David Williamson, stated that the film portrays "a male to male relationship that goes beyond just friendship. It was sublimated homosexuality… an innocent love story between two men" (Hamilton and Matthews 161-162). Casting Mark Lee as Hamilton further implies that their relationship is a kind of suppressed homosexuality with Lee's feminine energy contrasted with Mel Gibson's erstwhile energy.

Dunne, throughout the film, establishes himself as a metonym of a more astute, confident nation that embraces change and a belief in itself. In sacrificing himself to save Dunne, Hamilton exemplifies the notion of mateship, which Gammage and Williamson have described as a "particular Australian virtue... Men lived by it. They died by it and it could become their finest epitaph" (57). Hamilton's death can also be eliminating the possibility of a sexual consummation between the two young men. Mark Simpson locates this within the tradition of genre war films that insist on the elimination of the most sensitive of the soldiers to save not only the others but also as a definitive way of eliminating the possibility of homosexuality (227). The spectre of homosexuality, an anathema in the relations among 'real' men, is a subtle way for the filmmakers to question the creed of mateship.

Filmed thirty years after *Gallipoli*, *Red Dog* also propagates a very conventional depiction

Fig. 17. A screenshot from *Red Dog* (01: 54). This is Tom's initial look of the local inhabitants. The gothic tropes used knowingly in this segment of the film positions the film in an intertextual dialogue with *Wake in Fright*.

of mateship. The screen adaptation of de Bernières's novella, *Red Dog* is steeped in nostalgia including its representation of mateship as a "bulwark against the incursions of a homogenising global culture" as suggested by Graeme Davison (38). This is more pertinent in modern Australia because of the perennial national impulse to stand tall in terms of global significance, a type of recompense resulting from a "sense of loss from the Old World…satisfying the emotional need for belonging"' (Dyrenfurth 22). Originally written by Englishman Louis de Bernières as part travelogue and part animal memoir, the 2011 Stenders film has amplified the targeted age of its audience and significantly altered the function of a text; by doing so, the hypotext has become a laconic paean to Australian masculinity and the myth of mateship. A young truck driver Tom, played by Luke Ford, stops at a country pub in Dampier, Western Australia, where he finds many of the town's inhabitants debating the possible euthanising of a dog that appears to be collectively owned: "given the run of the town, he's everyone's mate but nobody's pet until he meets John" (Wilson, Review of *Red Dog*). During this one evening blond, blue-eyed Tom is told of the many adventures of the red kelpie dog as recounted by different people whose lives have been touched and altered by the aloof and proud animal that encapsulates the spirit of egalitarianism so lauded in Australian society: "Tally Ho was an obstinate dog, without a doubt, and didn't consider himself to be anybody's subordinate, not even Jack's. It never occurred to him that he was anything less than equal" (de Bernières 106).

This premature wake for the dog serves as the skeletal narrative of the episodes that follow and eventually transforms the young Australian man who, by the conclusion of the narrative, becomes a part of this community of mates. Jeff Zaleski suggests, "the dog is clearly meant to evoke the pioneering Australian's conception of himself: independent,

resourceful, footloose and stubborn" (par. 1). The first thing Tom as the innocent outsider hears when he enters the town pub is the local police sergeant, the embodiment of authority, who remarks "I can't shoot a mate" (00:02:16). When Tom enters the backroom to confront what he imagines to be a group of Outback hoodlums (see Fig. 17), he realises the mate in question is a dog. In this way, the film's director establishes the personified nature of the animal. The sharing of Red Dog stories, recounted by mates during the wake for the infirm animal, binds the community together, as does the discriminating, but egalitarian, affections of the titular character. "Everyone's got a Red Dog story," said Jocko. 'Someone ought to write them down" (de Bernières 110). In *Animals in Film* (2002) Jonathan Burt argues that animals occupy a unique position within the lexicon of screen imagery, with the potential to elicit a highly emotional response (32). Seen in this light, the anthropomorphic Kelpie canine becomes a substitute for the audience, allowing them to experience the values promulgated by the screen adaptation, particularly those associated with loyalty, independence, a fair go and mateship.

One of the reasons the screen adaptation of *Red Dog* resonated so strongly with so many Australian viewers is that it both illustrated the conventional depiction of mateship, as primarily the domain of men in the Outback, but also challenged this ever so imperceptibly. The way it achieved the latter is through a more inclusive and contemporaneous understanding of mateship as espoused by most Australians, by including women and people of non-English speaking background. Additionally, the helicopter shots used in the filming of *Red Dog* endow it with a type of mythic grandeur. The use of well-known quintessential Australian songs in the soundtrack such as "Evie - Part One" (Stevie Wright) and "Eagle Rock" (Daddy Cool) also reinforce the notion that an inclusive understanding of mateship is a desirable goal. A notable and poignant scene

in the film, following Jocko's rousing speech about Red Dog, sees all the inhabitants of the town gather at the pub to keep vigil over the gravely ill animal and to praise its virtues in a panegyric manner.[33]

Throughout its narrative, *Red Dog* illustrates how being considered a mate is the most eminent manifestation of masculinity, particularly in a society where women are in the minority. As shown through the main four mates, (Vanno, Peeto, Jocko and John), particularly by their interactions with the eponymous character, mateship is a displacement of the close intimate companionship one associates with a 'wife' through a sublimated homosexual relationship, as suggested by Ward in *The Australian Legend* (93). Even though the word 'mate' itself is not uniquely Australian in derivation, mateship has accrued a distinct Australian designation throughout the country's white history since 1788. Jocko highlights the Australian notion of mateship, delineating it from a British militaristic camaraderie. Jocko concludes his address by suggesting, to unanimous approval, that they should be honouring, "somebody that represents the Pilbara in all of us and I say that somebody, dammit, is a dog!" (1:15:36). The collective grieving for Red Dog takes place in the "crowded little police station" in the novel (de Bernières 108) but in Stenders' film, it is transported to the Mermaid Hotel because the pub endures as the pantheon of mateship in Australian culture. The manner in which Jocko delivers his address subtly iterates the nexus between mateship and Australian identity, which, as many have commented, including Miriam Dixson in *The Real Matilda* (1999), invariably finds expression in male identity.

Changes to the *Red Dog* narrative, necessitated by the adaptation process and the book's change of form, increase the audience engagement by the utilisation of a classic three-act

[33] This speech, essentially a homage to mateship has been created for the film text.

narrative arc. The screen adaptation illustrates the contradictory nature of Australian masculinity, or as Ward has observed, "the contrast between the uncompromising and taciturn masculine hardness in the surface and the unavowed, almost feminine love beneath it" (93). The film is aided, at least in displaying the hard-masculine bodies of Australian males, by its 1970s setting, "the decade that fashion forgot"[34], and Marriot Kerr's costume designs that proudly flaunt the hardness of fit men's bodies, both at work and play[35].

In the film's penultimate scene Tom is authorised and acknowledged by the other men as a mate before he speaks to Nancy who later locates in him the spirit of being a 'gentleman' (the exact word she had used previously for John) and falls in love with him. When Tom returns a year later with a young red kelpie puppy, as a marital gift for Nancy, the triumvirate is renewed. Nancy never questions the bonds of mateship; in fact, she draws strength from them. In a confronting scene with her landlords, the odious Cribbages, she confidently threatens, "I'm calling the boys at Hamersley Iron" (40:04), a line which is replicated in the film from de Bernières's novella (101). Viewed from this perspective, Nancy is not disturbing the traditional order of mateship but rather she is part of the new, inclusive understanding of mateship that includes women.

The iconic Australian phrase 'I've been everywhere, mate', concludes the story. Mateship is at the core of the *Red Dog* intertexts, elevating the fragmented narrative consisting of a series of vignettes, into a poignant tale of loyalty amongst equals (Blagrove 21). Bartlett comments on the role of the personified canine as a mate: "keeping these lonely men company and listening to stories no-one else wanted to hear. Now he demonstrates how

[34] As claimed by Tracey Turner in her book *The 70s: The Decade that Style Forgot* (2007).
[35] Due to the lack of work safety regulations of this era the film depicts men performing hard physical labour wearing very skimpy shorts and singlets.

far he will go to prove his friendship and loyalty, spending years searching high and low for John" (22).

In contrast to this panegyric exploration of mateship in the *Red Dog* intertexts, Graeme Turner finds the institution of mateship stifling for the individual because it forces Australian men to aspire to and perform a pre-ordained notion of masculinity in order to enjoy the privileges of patriarchal order (96). This can be illustrated by discussing the play and film of *Blackrock*, where the pursuit of mateship by the character of Jared demonstrates some of the destructive aspects of the institution of mateship including violence and misogyny.

Australian film commentators Moran and Vieth locate the examination of mateship in *Blackrock* within the category of troubled guys - a "recurring subject in Australian social realist films of young men trapped in milieus and circumstances for which there is no escape" (148). As such, the enactment of masculinity is seen as both a position of victimhood and as the source of the problem. Jonathan Bollen, Adrian Kiernander, and Bruce Parr develop this notion further by observing that the use of violence as part of Australian masculinity may have been part of the national character in the past but, in more contemporary works, it is perceived as an index of social disadvantage and marginalisation (49). Moreover, violence as used in the *Blackrock* intertexts is a reminder of mateship's associated oppressive nature, arising from excessive loyalty to one's mates. Alexandra Heller-Nicholas adds that the loyalty associated with mateship is "a key element of white Australian masculinity [that] often comes at a horrific cost" (109).

By contextualising the action of *Blackrock* as a study of marginalised young men in a disadvantaged part of Australia, the individual actions of the perpetrators of the heinous

crimes of gang rape and murder are somewhat exculpated. According to theatre director David Berthold, *Blackrock* "hones in on the social and cultural forces that can lead a group of boys to do such a horrific thing and in how the rape/murder affects those left behind" (*Reading Australia*). Lisa Macdonald adds, "the young men are so much the victims of machismo and 'mateship' that you find yourself laughing at the absurdity of it all — that is until the naked sexism and cruelty of their behaviour takes your breath away in the next scene" (par. 5).

And yet, the ending of *Blackrock* signals the ascent of a more contemporaneous understanding of mateship and the dislodgment of the oppressiveness of traditional mateship. This is achieved through the construct of the two central characters, Ricko and Jared, and their evolving mateship. Ricko is a representative of traditional masculinity that values loyalty to one's fellow mates above all, particularly against the power of authoritarian institutions. *Blackrock*, both the play and film, suggest that Ricko's inability to accept the changing nature of mateship that has evolved in contemporary Australia is what leads to his suicide. For Ricko, the parochial world of Blackrock is the only place where he can enjoy the status and privileges of masculinity through the adulation of his younger acolytes, whom he erroneously considers to be mates. As portrayed by the then twenty-five-year-old actor Simon Lyndon, Ricko's physicality, particularly his "handsome, blonde, surf-toned muscularity" (Brien), is used consciously in the film to reiterate his status as a "legend" and is a stark contrast to the real-life perpetrator, Matthew Webster, a tall overweight bouncer.[36] Ricko's idealised status within the insular working-class world of Blackrock is affirmed by the ebullient reception of his return. His

[36] Simon Lyndon played the character of Jared in the *Blackrock* play, a less sympathetic character than his cinematic counterpart.

commitment to mateship is clearly demonstrated as his first port of call is not to his family or girlfriend, but rather, to his mates. He confidently and simplistically pronounces, "guys who got mates, they're mates, that's all you got, that's the way it is" (2:03).

The film constructs the character of Ricko as a demonstrative larrikin who is, nonetheless, pathological in his understanding of mateship. In the play, he informs Jared, "you're a bro. I'd be there for you" (Enright 44) when he pleads with his mate to provide an alibi for the heinous murder he has committed. In his pathology, Ricko sees the betrayal of mateship as a much more insidious action than homicide. "I said I was with my mate so I knew you'd be there for me" (82:43).

The film adaptation presents Ricko's plea to Jared more pragmatically and subtly. He tells him, "I told them I was with you" (78:02:15) and later at the beach at night Ricko reassures his less confident acolyte, "mate, we back each other up, we're laughin," (79:12:05) denoting the advantages of mateship. In the play, as observed by Berthold, Ricko unabashedly "invokes the unswerving bonds of mateship" (par. 17) by assuring the conflicted Jared that, as a mate, he has become a mirror-image of himself, "You are, man, you fucken are!" (45:23) Ricko calls Jared 'mate' whilst relating a former surfing adventure to a young enthralled audience of devotees. When Jared tells him, "hey glad you're back" (04:12) in a tone that suggests closeness, Ricko immediately retorts "what are you a queer dog" (04:16) using the discourse of homophobia to castigate the younger man and warn him that any sign of weakness, or suggestion of homosexuality, can mark him as an unfit postulant to normative masculinity. This establishes for the audience that homophobia is, firstly, a "defining feature of certain kinds of masculinity" (Bollen, Kiernander and Parr 11) and, secondly, that aspiring to the status of 'mate' is an integral

aspect of a dominant and acceptable manifestation of masculinity that has unspoken boundaries.

The bond between Jared and his mate Ricko is affirmed when Jared gets an identical tattoo to that sported by Ricko which, metonymically at least, authorises the commitment between the two men. The special bond between mates is acknowledged in another departure from the original source material when Jared not only attends Ricko's funeral at sea but also takes a central role in this. Jared's ultimate anagnorisis occurs when he discovers that his trusted mate Ricko was the murderer of Tracy and that the slaying occurred in such a sadistic manner. This self-realisation is an acknowledgement by Jared that "his moral compass has been so deranged by the cultural imperative for males to remain loyal to their mates" (Heller-Nicholas 113).

Notably, the powerful local hegemon, Stewart Ackland, a Blackrock native, does not show loyalty to any other men in his world. He is contemptuous of relationships based on 'mateship' and he attempts to inculcate this in his son, Toby. For Stewart, real power can be located within the context of capitalistic endeavour, not in some mythical outmoded institution such as mateship. When the problems of the real world encroach on his family life, his first response is to call the trusted family solicitor. Seen from Ackland's perspective, the *Blackrock* intertexts imply that the status of mateship is akin to a compensatory mode for those men who are unsuccessful in the business world of contemporary Australia.[37] Ricko, who invokes the institution of mateship prolifically, only returns to Blackrock after his initial attempt to create a life for himself away from parochial surroundings has failed.

[37] This also resonates with *Bastard Boys* and *Devil's Dust*.

The film's dénouement demonstrates the futility of masculinity when this encroaches on morality through a significant alteration from the original hypotext. This involves the geographical setting used for the reformation of Jared which includes his denunciation of the anachronistic institution of mateship that has diminished his emotional and moral growth. Even after Ricko's death, Jared finds it difficult to reconcile his former avowal of mateship with Ricko's monstrous action, propelling him into an emotional conflagration. He eschews his responsibility as student, son, and lover and instead buys Ricko's Sandman intending to follow his mate's former pathway, "the Ricko route". His conscience, however, catalysed by his intense confrontation with his mother, Diane, forces him to reconsider his future and to embrace a more congruent understanding of mateship - one that includes women. In Enright's play, Jared's transformation takes place by the ocean, the site of Tracy's rape and murder, suggesting that water can act as a regenerative agent in the lives of people. Jared willingly lends his surfboard to Cherie and pleads with her to dispose the keys to Ricko's beloved van.

In Vidler's film, however, Jared's recalibration takes place on land, when he comes to the Blackrock cemetery to help Diane and Cherie remove the defamatory graffiti that has appeared on Tracy's tombstone. This is significant, for it reminds audiences that Jared, after much consternation, is now rejecting the mythic bond of mateship that was typically enacted by white men in the bush and excluded any allegiance to anybody but one's mate. Henry Lawson celebrated such a definition of mateship as a hegemonic norm of Australian masculinity and Russel Ward notes that in Lawson's tradition of mateship, "a man should have his own special mate with whom he shared money, goods and even secret aspirations, and for whom, even when in the wrong, he was prepared to make almost any sacrifice" (93). Serendipitously, this last scene in *Blackrock* was filmed in

Sydney's iconic Waverley Cemetery, where Henry Lawson is buried and possibly this coincidence could be viewed symbolically as a sign that Lawson's intransigent understanding of mateship, too, is also buried.

There exists ample evidence in 21st century screen adaptations of new progressive understandings of the phenomenon of mateship outside masculinist codes of behaviour. In the twenty years since the release of Connell's *Masculinities* in 1995, the status of mateship as the cornerstone of hegemonic masculinity has been challenged by the contestation of mateship by individuals other than white heterosexual men (Dyrenfurth 212). The representation of mateship as a male bastion has been challenged in various adaptations, including *Muriel's Wedding* through the central relationship between Rhonda and the titular character and more recently, through a postcolonial and feminist perspective in *The Sapphires*.

As one examines Australian screen adaptations in the 21st century one realises that due to changing cultural mores and conditions, those characters outside the hegemonic inner sanctum "will not accept hegemony passively" (Edgar and Sedgwick 164). If mateship is an irrefutable ingredient of hegemonic masculinity in Australia, then the challenge to the depiction of mateship, as the province of white men from an Anglo-Celtic background, can be indicative of the questioning of the imprimatur of patriarchal privilege. This is shown both through the embracing of friendship as the new form of inclusive masculinity in *Please Like Me* (2013) but also in *Tomorrow When the War Began* (2009) as well as through pacifism in *The Water Diviner* (2014). In many respects, Australia's only local box office hit of 2014, *The Water Diviner* directed by Russell Crowe, "is a natural companion piece to Peter Weir's revered 1981 drama, *Gallipoli*", as noted by Eddie Cockrell. It should be noted that Crowe's film shifts the examination of mateship from

the familiar Australian context of soldiers fighting in solidarity to defeat a common enemy to a more intra-cultural context, by examining the growing friendship, mutual respect and mateship between Joshua Connor, the film's protagonist and the Turkish officer, Major Hassan. This bond between former enemies certainly echoes that found in Stephen Daisely's award-winning novel *Traitor* (2010) but it also coincides with a more reconciliatory impulse that is founded in the multicultural inclusiveness of contemporary Australia.

Crowe's 2014 film is a reminder of the need to constantly revisit one's understanding and appreciation of the enactment of mateship because as Mcgregor Duncan argues, "we should work up the notion of mateship so that, far from being something between blokes, it is used generically within Australian community to refer to 'good citizenship'" (Duncan 18). In this vein, *Old School*, the eight-part 2013 ABC drama, adapted from the short film *Lennie Cahill Shoots Through* (2004), illustrates a congruent authentic depiction of Australian mateship. The panoply of diverse characters in the show including many non-British characters such as the Arabic biker Moses, Harry Zhao, Vince Pelagatti, Cath Khoury and Jason Dhourkay, all use the term 'mate' profusely as a badge of honour to greet and refer to their various associates. The central character of Lennie Cahill, played by Bryan Brown, even refers in Episode 8 to a prison guard as a mate.

Ted and Lennie are both laconic characters, from the opposite side of the law and, due to their common objective (to uncover the missing money from a five-million-dollar robbery heist) they become friendlier with each other throughout the eight episodes of *Old School*. However, they are unlikely to contest the mantle of matehood as shown from the following extract from Episode 7 (31:01).

LENNIE Calm down. We'll get her back safe, mate.

TED Listen. When you say 'mate' what do you mean by that?

LENNIE What?

TED Do you think of me as a friend?

LENNIE Oh jeez, I don't know. I've never thought about it. Are you feeling alright?

TED Look, it's a serious bloody question. Could you just answer it?

LENNIE Well, we probably don't hate each other like we used to, but I'm not sure I'm gonna get you to do the eulogy at my funeral. Does that answer your question?

Dyrenfurth observes in his 2015 publication that it is only locally, in Australia, that mateship has become inseparable from national identity and that, furthermore, it has been co-opted by political figures and ideologues to fortify their own agendas (7). The difference between aspirational hegemonic masculinity and a more inclusive understanding of masculinity can be seen in the adaptation of the Glendyn Ivin drama, *Beaconsfield* (2012).

The film has been adapted from real-life events and their reporting. The plethora of hypotexts used as sources for this adaptation by scriptwriter Judi McCrossin embedded the tale of the trapped miners and their subsequent release within the discourse of heroism and mateship. The 2016 leader of the Australian Labor Party, Bill Shorten, then National Secretary of the Australian Workers Union, is credited with endowing the actions of the miners as heroic by referring to their release as "the great escape" (Phillips "The Australian Media" par. 10). As reported by Ben Cubby, Australia's then Prime Minister Howard assured the trapped miners of the solidarity of all Australians, "everyone is with you mate" (par. 18) and, commenting on the funeral arrangements for

the deceased miner Larry Knight, added "it was a wonderful act of mateship of that family in postponing his funeral so that his mates could be there. I think that's a wonderful expression of the Australian spirit" (par. 25). Echoing comparable sentiments, Nick Squires reports, "the episode has tapped into the tradition of self-reliance and dependence on your closest mate which goes back to the earliest days of colonial Australia, when the harsh conditions of settler life required people to stick together" (par. 4).

Squires's comment is telling in terms of how mateship is understood in terms of social exclusiveness. It prompts the reader to question the invisibility of Aboriginal people in the imagining of the "early days of colonial Australia". The people referred to here by Squires are predominantly white people and by this implication such people are naturalised as settlers without any consideration to the Aboriginal populations they have displaced. The "harsh conditions" might well refer to the unfamiliar physical environment in the Outback but they could also be interpreted as an oblique reference to frontier warfare, bestowing a more sinister association onto the exalted status of mateship. The reporting of the mining disaster is, according to Jason Bainbridge, a "confirmation of the increasing tabloidisation and commodification of news in Australia and the impact of celebrity on news production" (44), which is echoed by *Crikey* writer Martin Hirst asserting, "ever since the death of Princess Diana the media has created a new form of coverage – the 'blanket'. Emotional events, like the death of a popular princess, or the rescue of an 'entombed' survivor, attract the genuinely empathetic and the curious voyeur" (par. 2).

The seismic collapse of the gold mine, serendipitously enough, took place on ANZAC Day in 2006, which is being celebrated over the opening credits of the film. This assists

in establishing the context of *Beaconsfield* but also sagaciously reminds the audience of the Anzac myth, and the close homosocial order and desirability of mateship as being the main currency of Australian identity. Even though the term 'mate' is used prolifically throughout the film text, (miner Todd Russell even uses the term in talking to his young son) *Beaconsfield* judiciously observes that mateship is primarily utilised when working-class colleagues of the miners are talking, such as when the explosive expert is talking to Russell. The film subtly challenges the status of mateship when it repeatedly records the media reporting of the rescue team's effort to free their mates. This is reinforced by the dramatic score by Stephen Rae, but only when the action does not involve Webb and Russell confined in their subterranean nightmare. At the conclusion of the narrative, as the larrikin character of Brant Webb, played by Shane Jacobson, is about to be rescued, he tells Todd Russell, played by Lachy Hulme, "you'll be alright mate. I'm coming straight back for you", to which the latter replies, "see you my friend." (1:47:23) This refusal of Russell of the mantle of mateship is affirmed by Matthew Denholm who quotes trapped miner Russell who stated, "we weren't mates before and we're not really mates after. But we will always share something in common" (par. 18).

Beaconsfield suggests that mateship is often offered as a defence for imposing one's will and ideological agenda on the population. In the media-savvy world of the 21st Century, mateship becomes confused with fairness, or more precisely, the hallowed notion of a 'fair go' (or equal opportunity) in Australian society. This is shown clearly in *Bastard Boys* as an assault "on the collective culture of the nation's workplaces (Dyrenfurth 214). The ABC drama demonstrates through its narrative that the institution of mateship has been co-opted by both sides of the political divide as an ideological weapon to add to their arsenal of hegemonic masculinity. *Bastard Boys* generated so much media attention partly

because it managed to capture the ambivalence of mateship as a pathway to hegemonic masculinity. The adaptation demonstrates how, politically and culturally, both conservative and progressive sides of politics and other institutions have claimed the eulogised position of mateship as an intrinsic value of Australian identity.

Let us take a closer look at *Bastard Boys*, the last screen adaptation in this chapter examining the paradox of mateship. Directed by Raymond Quint and scripted by Sue Smith, it is a dramatisation of the 1988 events on Australia's waterfront between Patrick Stevedores and the Maritime Union of Australia. The ABC miniseries is an adaptation of the 2000 non-fiction book, *Waterfront: The Battle that Changed Australia* by Helen Trinca and Anne Davies but, additionally, it uses extensive interviews, carried out by scriptwriter Sue Smith and her production team, as well as official court transcripts as hypotexts. *Bastard Boys*, and particularly the huge controversy that followed its broadcast on the ABC in 2007, indicate that the dispute itself was to be "a litmus test for all unionised workers" as suggested by Milner and Coyle (145). Similarly, I would argue that the masculinity enacted in the drama by the various participants can also be considered a litmus test for the institution of mateship, particularly when one considers former Prime Minister Howard's public effusive endorsement of mateships in several media pronouncements. These paratexts starkly contradict his actions, as presented in *Bastard Boys*.

The plethora of sources that this screen adaptation draws from locates it as an example of popular culture which, for Michael Gurevitch and Mark R. Levy, mediates between a personal and a cultural construction of identity, "a site on which various social groups, institutions, and ideologies struggle over the definition and construction of social reality" (19). Although theorist Hans Jauss did not write specifically on adaptation theory, his

work on reception theory is informative in understanding the enactment of masculinity. He believes that appraising a text, juxtaposed with other texts, particularly ones which can be considered as paratexts, can influence the reader's understanding beyond issues of cultural context and intended meaning. Specifically, Jauss contends that "a work is not an object that stands by itself…it is much more like an orchestration that strikes ever new resonances among its readers" (21). In this vein, I am claiming that our understanding of hegemonic masculinity, and its nexus to mateship, as represented in *Bastard Boys* cannot be seen in isolation to other texts but must be analysed and appreciated in the light of what other screen adaptations have articulated regarding masculinity.

The word 'mate' is mentioned some ninety times in *Bastard Boys,* particularly by trade union official John Coombs, and this usage becomes even more prolific when one considers the word 'bloke' which is also used interchangeably throughout the four episodes. The term mate is used only once by the business hegemon Chris Corrigan, in reference to one of his business associates but I propose this is used consciously and strategically.

The battle for hegemonic masculinity in *Bastard Boys* is contested both by the working class, under the auspices of a unionised labour force, and the ruling professional elite comprising bankers, lawyers, politicians, and business executives. The pre-title opening highlights the theme of war as noted by Lisa Milner and Rebecca Coyle (146). The conflagration which forms the basis of the drama is not simply one that is a result of an industrial issue but is also a battle between traditional and inclusive masculinities. Caught in the crossfire is the bewildering state of mateship. *Bastard Boys* implies that a traditional form of hegemonic masculinity has been mythologised and perpetuated by the unions as a natural right. The miniseries repeatedly reminds viewers that this entitlement has been

hard fought for by union men and has been inculcated into the collective psyche of the labour force, cleverly shown in the screen adaptation through the father and son team of Tony and Brendan Tully. Through the realisation, reached by both father and son, that their rich history of controlling the waterfront through physical violence, aggression, belligerence, and bullying tactics is no longer viable, one is reminded of a host of Australian literary texts that, similarly, argue that out-dated work practices can no longer serve the interests of people. The influential Australian play, *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* (1955) by Ray Lawler, is one such work where the male itinerant workers realise that their traditional enactment of masculinity has dissipated and can no longer serve their interests.

Mateship on a collective scale is shown when a group of Construction Forestry Mining and Energy Union workers arrive to support their Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) mates. For Union representative Sean McSwain, the dispute becomes an irrefrangible examination of his own masculinity and a way to measure himself against a hostile company of men who hold entrenched ideas about how to enact their masculinity. It is during this scene, which critics have singled out for its hyperbolic representation, that McSwain assumes the mantle of hegemonic masculinity. Before this moment, he was derided by some of his fellow workers, patronized by the union leadership and dismissed by his estranged wife, Janine, for failing to live up to his potential as a man. She tells him, "the night of the big picket, I watched you with your loudhailer … All those people trusted you" (Ep. 4, 1:27:22).

What occurs in this scene is significant in the examination of hegemonic masculinity. At the behest of the MUA lawyer Greg Combet, McSwain manages to demonstrate to all his co-workers that a performance of an old-fashioned masculinity that relies on physical

strength is no longer feasible in a contemporary society that depends so much on the power of media representations. Instead, a new type of hegemonic masculinity, one which is civically responsible, non-confrontational and diplomatic, must be embraced by working-class men such as McSwain, if they are to achieve even a modicum of success in contemporary society. Tony Tully does not see this but McSwain begins to. Combet, a self-confessed 'nerd', certainly sees the advantages of mateship as a sacred order but he lacks the charisma and the ability to package himself as one of the blokes – most evidently made apparent by his unwillingness to drink beer, a decision considered by men like wharfies as blasphemous.

Bastard Boys remains critical of the traditional enactment of mateship which was forged in earlier times when the support of one's closest associates was pivotal. Even though the screen text is most sympathetic to the striking wharfies, it does not shy away from demonstrating the undesirability of a rigid enactment of masculinity, based on violence, stubbornness and a feeble reliance on anachronistic ways of thinking. This is shown when the newly-elected union representative, McSwain, cajoled by the experienced union organiser John Coombs, is attempting to convince his fellow workers that a non-confrontational approach may be a conducive way to solve their industrial stalemate.

Tony Tully is a second-generation wharfie stalwart who is finding it difficult to accept the non-violent protest that is advocated by the MUA. At the beginning of Episode 1 he is portrayed as a somewhat menacing figure, achieved by tilting camera work and harsh lighting. Metonymically, Tully, played with aplomb by Jack Thompson as an archetypal larrikin anti-authoritarian figure, represents the exalted working-class hero who is committed to collective endeavour, similarly personified by his earlier work in *Sunday Too Far Away*. The laconic and stubborn family man, however, also embodies what is

problematic about waterside workers by others: manipulative, selectively idle, blind to emergent best practices and corrupt. Such accusatory sentiments are proposed unemotionally by businessman Corrigan, affirmed by Governmental spokesmen, and demonstrated in the text through Tully's nepotism when he procures work for his affable but uncouth son Brendan.

Brendan Tully, played by Dan Wyllie, shares his father's confidence and distinct anti-authoritarian impulse. Tully's lackadaisical attitude towards work is compensated for by his strong family values and his genuine concern for his fellow workers, demonstrated when he comes to the aid of the maligned McSwain. Tully's maturity and insight is shown when he correctly identifies the poignancy and the futility of his father's action of attempting to stop a truck with 'scabs' by brandishing a rock. Tully not only realises the pointlessness of this 'Goliath' moment for his father but informs McSwain about him, confiding in him that this was a moment of apotheosis for the mature worker.

The casting of Thompson as Tony Tully is significant intertextually because the actor has played a number of other memorable characters that invoke traditional masculinity and here, his casting, invites the audience to see his latest enactment of masculinity within the prism of these earlier roles. These prior roles include the country lawyer who is humbled by the humility and unshakable bonds of mateship forged by the men he is defending in *Breaker Morant*, the mythic sheepshearer Foley in *Sunday Too Far Away*, the likable working-class father in *The Sum of Us* (1994), the epitome of geniality and moral rectitude embodied by his character Ted, in *Caddie* (1976), the colourful but nurturing coach in *The Club* and his definitive portrayal of Outback masculinity in *The Man from Snowy River* as the mythic Clancy of the Overflow. Warwick Mules argues that traditional mateship has been replaced by a new inclusive understanding of mateship that is based on a familiar,

communal milieu that is attributable to the powerful paradigm of multiculturalism in contemporary Australian culture, particularly with familial bonds (207). Tully has recognised that his enactment of masculinity will no longer serve his current interests, as conveyed in Fig. 18. This consideration of what an actor can bring to the attention of the audience as an adaptor makes the transition between traditional masculinity and inclusive masculinities all the more pertinent.

Bastard Boys communicates the disenfranchisement, malaise and hostilities that abound within a working-class collective which commentators, including Martin Flanagan, attribute to the "decade-long ascendancy of neoliberal economic thought" (Dyrenfurth 199). The privileges associated with the upper echelons of patriarchy, which is another

Fig. 18. This screenshot from *Bastard Boys* (Disc 2, 1:49:53) shows a defeated Tony Tully, played by Jack Thompson leaving the waterfront forever, having realised that his predilection for a more confrontational enactment of masculinity has now been replaced by a more conciliatory inclusive understanding of masculinity.

way of explicating Connell's definition of hegemonic masculinity, are no longer within the grasp of everyone, contradicting John Howard's pronouncement that "a classless society… lives up to its creed of practical mateship" (Brett 20). In the hypotext *Waterfront: The Battle that Changed Australia* (2000), Howard assumes a more prominent role than in the screen adaptation stating, "I support the interventionist strategy" (Trinca & Davies 39). By demonstrating that blue-collar working blokes like Tully and McSwain, who routinely call each other mate, are jettisoned from Howard's understanding of mateship, the text is able to highlight the hypocrisy and opportunism of the Howard Government.[38] Despite its public approbations of this hallowed institution, its support rested strictly with diligent resourceful individuals and not within unionized collectives. Ultimately, *Bastard Boys* demonstrates that the regional, traditionally-valued institution of mateship is overwhelmed by dominant hegemonic masculinity enacted on the global level in the context of "transnational business" (Connell and Messerschmidt 849).

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This chapter has argued that mateship is perceived as an idealised state in the homosocial relations of men in Australia and that the pursuit of the mantle of mateship can be connected to the value of egalitarianism. Through noting some of the challenges to the mythologised state of mateship, as communicated in screen adaptations, I have illustrated how the very presence of mateship can be used to disguise fissures in Australia's so-called classless society and to obfuscate marked economic discrepancies. By scrutinising how the desirable state of mateship is exploited socially, politically culturally, and economically by agents of the hegemonic order, I have shown how the performance of

[38] The word bloke is also used prolifically throughout *Bastard Boys*, as a term which is almost interchangeable with 'mate.'

masculinity is best considered within a relational framework and not as a fixed cargo of traits and categories. I have also examined how mateship displaces the homoerotic and reinstates masculine heterosexuality as a prerequisite of Australian male identity. Furthermore, the 'equalising impulse' associated with mateship supports the central proposal in my thesis that the enactments of masculinity which are valued and condoned in the Australian context are not those associated with the rich and powerful, but those which are steeped within the identity of the working-class battler. This will be further interrogated in the next chapter.

Chapter 4

Complicit masculinities and the purified cyphers of mythic intention

The previous chapters argued that mateship and larrikinism are deemed as desirable traits in Australian men seeking the benefits and rewards of hegemonic masculinity, and that the examination of representations of masculinities in Australian screen adaptations has shifted the depiction and reception of mateship and larrikinism. This chapter examines the importance of nationhood in the formation of Australian identity, its association with masculinity through the figure of the digger, or the Anzac warrior, and the impact of this ongoing association. The Australian screen adaptations examined as part of my work construct, address, and reconfigure the Anzac legend through representation and have responded to the challenges of pacifism and multiculturalism within the forty-year span examined in this thesis. This chapter also examines the desirability of 'an Anzac identity' within the Australian psyche and suggests that, ironically, such a pursuit only serves the interests of others and not the warriors themselves. Again, the exultation of the Anzac hero is inseparable from a working-class 'battler' identity which, I am proposing in this work, has been entrenched as the unifying element in the enactment of masculinities in Australian screen texts.

Australians have been involved in many international conflicts including both World Wars, the Boer War, the Vietnam War and more recently in Iraq and Afghanistan, but no conflict has left such an indelible mark on the national consciousness as the battle of Gallipoli. The legend of the Anzacs was established by official war correspondent C. E. W. Bean even before the campaign had ended. He records in his official history,

> by dawn on December 20th Anzac had faded into a dim blue line lost amid other

> hills on the horizon as the ships took their human freight to Imbros, Lemnos and Egypt. But Anzac stood, and still stands, for reckless valour in a good cause, for enterprise, resourcefulness, fidelity, comradeship, and endurance that will never own defeat (181).

Adrian Caesar argues that Bean was the first writer to give "the Anzac myth a patina of academic respectability" (152). The myth of Anzac grew exponentially since the conclusion of WWI, prompting Arthur Burke, in "Spirit of Anzac", to define it as an invincible force,

> a powerful driving sensation that can only be felt. It is a feeling that burns in the heart of every Australian and New Zealand countryman. A warm, tender, fiery, even melancholy ideal that nurtures intense patriotism in the innermost soul of everybody (par. 7).

Significantly, Burke also records that even though the word 'Anzac' only came into common usage in late 1915, it can be used to describe armed forces who have fought for Australia both before and after that military campaign. Graham Seal, echoing previous commentators like Russel Ward, also maintains that the myth of the Anzac hero has become inseparable from Australian identity in the collective psyche (6-9). He argues that the Anzac myth operates as a "deliberate ideological construct which, in collusion with the digger tradition operates hegemonically within Australian society" (4). Such a sentiment has been widely perpetuated during the centenary commemoration of the Gallipoli campaign in 2015, during which former Prime Minister Tony Abbott, asserted that the Anzacs had become the "founding heroes of modern Australia" (Wright par. 5).

The long eight-month Gallipoli campaign may be considered a sideshow of WWI by

military historians but for Anglo-Celtic Australians the experience at Gallipoli remains, as argued by Mark McKenna, "the most powerful myth of nationhood" (111). Similarly, David Caesar observes that "Australian nationhood was confirmed on the heights of Gallipoli" (147) whilst Elizabeth Webby states that through the heroism of the Anzacs, "Australia was seen to have finally joined the company of nations as equals." Webby then proceeds, boldly and controversially, to suggest that Gallipoli enabled Australia to erase its birth stains (9). That is, the bravery and sacrifice associated with Gallipoli enabled Australia to sideline the historical reality that the founding of the colony was made possible by decimating the Aboriginal inhabitants and usurping their lands. The traumatic experience of the Great War provided a narrative for the newly established post-Federation nation of Australia as a testament to their superior masculinity, particularly through its focus on camaraderie, bravery, loyalty to mates, anti-authoritarian undertones and egalitarianism. Tellingly, such a representation of idealised Australian masculinity disseminated in adaptations such *Anzacs* (1985) and *1915* (1982) obfuscates the achievements of other Australians including Aboriginal Australians and women, a contradiction that could be further interrogated by future researchers.[39]

What is striking about the screen representation of the Anzac legacy is that whilst screen adaptations, and other screen texts, have been indisposed to question the value of the Anzac legend until the 2010s, many earlier print texts have done so. Two such acclaimed examples from theatre include Patrick White's *The Season at Sarsaparilla* (1965), and Alan Seymour's *The One Day of the Year* (1960), the latter remaining still the most potent challenge to the Anzac myth in Australian drama. Many anti-war poems were published

[39] The 2014 ABC television miniseries *Anzac Girls*, directed by Ken Cameron and Ian Watson, which has been adapted from the 2008 nonfiction book *The Other Anzacs* by Peter Rees, explores the proactive and invaluable contribution of Australian women in the various WWI campaigns. This screen adaptation is the only one, up-to-date, that focuses, almost exclusively on female Anzacs.

anonymously in *Labor Call* during the War, and others have been published since that denounce the glory of War and mourn the heavy loss of life.[40] In fact, works such as "Gallipoli" by Mary Gilmore and Vance Palmer's "The Farmer Remembers the Somme" align more with the anti-war sentiments expressed by British poets such as Wilfred Owen and Sigfried Sassoon, who both mourned the futile destruction of life and loss during WWI, than with the uncritical patriotism associated with Anzac screen texts. Novels such as Kylie Tennant's *Foveaux* (1938) also challenged the heroism associated with the Anzac legend as did William Baylebridge in *An Anzac Muster* (1962), presenting the archetypal Anzac hero as sexually-voracious and oppressive in his treatment of women. Likewise, Donald Black in *Red Dust* (1931) refutes the glory of war by focussing on the negative experiences of his characters and Lesbia Harford in *The Invaluable Mystery* (1987) embraces pacifism and indicts capitalist culture and its collusion with the arms industry.[41] Robert Dixon acknowledges all these Anzac-resistant texts and comments at length on the contradictions, tensions and paradoxes in "discourses of empire, gender and nation" (199).

The reception of such texts that questioned the glory of war and Australia's participation in military conflict abroad was muted. Instead, the mythologisation of the Anzac soldier took hold of the public psyche and laid the foundations for Weir's film of *Gallipoli* as a national urtext. The first film to document the Gallipoli campaign, *A Hero of the Dardanelles* (1915) directed by Alfred Rolfe, was adapted from 'live' events and was released in July of that year, right in the middle of the military conflict that did not conclude until December. Given its historical context, Rolfe's film was closely aligned to a national imperial agenda and was, in fact, used as a recruitment vehicle by the Ministry

[40] A radical left-wing newspaper, published in Melbourne.
[41] The writing alias for John Lyons Gray.

of Defence. Its success depended greatly on the film's claims of historical veracity but most notably, Rolfe's text also established the nexus between the white-male Anzac hero and Australian identity.[42]

Such a deferential positioning of the Anzac soldier would suggest that a man identified as such would be an idealised embodiment of masculinity and would thereby enjoy the benefits and advantages associated with this status. The screen adaptations scrutinised here, however, reveal that far from enjoying the privileges that hegemonic masculinity usually confers on its subjects, the typical Anzac warriors are rewarded only with disillusionment and death. Additionally, their very participation in warfare advances the interests of others, making them complicit in disseminating popular hegemonic agendas that, according to Margaret Wetherell and Nigel Edley, "preserve, legitimise and naturalise the interests of the powerful – marginalizing and subordinating the claims of other groups" (336).

Screen adaptations released before Australia's Bicentenary Celebration in 1988 uncritically represent Anzacs as brave and fearless patriots who are fighting on behalf of their country against immeasurable odds. According to these adaptations, the proud, independent warriors are not only confronting a merciless foreign enemy, but, paradoxically, their struggle is also one against the intransigence of British military hegemony. As part of this mythologisation of Anzacs, key Australian screen adaptations before 1988 communicate an idealisation of innocence, an exaltation of physical prowess and beauty and an invocation of the larrikin and other bushmen archetypes which Susan Dermody and Elizabeth Jacka have so astutely described as "protagonists who are

[42] This uncritical examination of the conflict was also replicated in two other notable films, released before 1975, *Diggers* (1931) directed by Frank Thring and *Forty Thousand Horsemen* (1940) directed by Charles Chauvel.

increasingly purified cyphers of mythic intention" (63).

Hegemonic masculinity is the most exalted status within the hierarchy of male relations and central to this is a man's physical prowess, manual capability and dexterity; bestowing on the recipient a hardened, bronzed idealised body. It can be argued that this becomes fetishized in narratives dealing with nationhood, inspiring English patrician writer Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett to eulogise "a magnificent body of men" (64). The myth of the bronzed über-masculine male has a long history in Australia, beginning in colonial times when physical labour was a reality for the new colony and then nurtured and magnified in the bush narratives. Symbolically, the active designation associated with men and their ability to protect and safeguard the 'passive other' (women, children and city folk) has always united masculinity with national imperatives. This idealisation of the male body as a protective force has been magnified in narratives of conflict and war, particularly through the admiring and scopophilic gaze of the cinema lenses. More importantly for this discussion, is the exaltation of the male body as a way of denoting a desirable form of masculinity and, indeed, celebrating an Australian identity.

The glorification of the Australian male body lies at the heart of screen adaptations dealing with the Anzac legend and nationhood and has been the least contested aspect of masculinities in the forty-year period examined in this thesis. Henry Lawson sagaciously anticipated Australia's rejoicing on the battlefield of Gallipoli in his poem "Sons of the South", claiming "the Star of the south shall rise in the lurid clouds of war", thus fusing the legend of the bushman with that of the Anzac warrior. Richard White quotes an 1883 newspaper article which noted that "our men are splendid material for any army; very

much above the average of the line in physique and intelligence." Compton McKenzie eulogises in his volume, *Gallipoli Memories*[43] (1929):

> There was not one of those glorious young men I saw that day who might not have been Ajax or Diomed, Hector or Achilles. Their almost complete nudity, their tallness and majestic simplicity of line, their rose-brown flesh burnt by the sun and purged of all grossness by the ordeal through which they were passing,

Fig. 19. "Anzacs Bathing" 1916 by George Lambert - oil on canvas. "Anzacs Bathing is a heroic image of the Anzacs at an early stage in the development of the legend of the men of the Australian and New Zealand forces who fought at Gallipoli. The nakedness and musculature of the men might suggest they are more than men and that they are like Greek gods, or at least the heroes of Greek legends." (National Gallery of Australia, George. W. Lambert Retrospective: Heroes & Icons, 'Introduction section, 29 June16 September 2007)

[43] Scottish writer, Sir Compton McKenzie, worked for British Intelligence during the Gallipoli expedition. He was a prolific author of both fiction and non-fiction. His novel, *Monarch of the Glen* was posthumously adapted into a successful television adaptation in 2005.

> all these united to create something as near to absolute beauty as I shall ever hope to see in this world (81).

The physicality of Australians was striking and historian Les Carlyon, author of *Gallipoli* (2001), observes that they were "bigger and stronger than working-class Englishmen of the same age" (135). He adds that the sheer physicality of Anzac soldiers distinguished them from the rest of the allied soldiers, aided by the fact that they were also "rough of manner and speech and not at all deferential" (Carlyon 155). Bean, the *Sydney Morning Herald* war correspondent who had become the official Gallipoli war historian, had a vision of 'Australian manhood' that was grounded both in rural values as well as in the Anzac narrative. Bean in his historical volumes routinely extols the agility, acuity, ingenuity, and bravery of the Anzacs, and above all their imposing physicality and their disciplined bodies. He is, however, very circumspect about reporting physical injuries and afflictions sustained by the soldiers, preferring to report on them as unified glorious bodies battling for the good of the nation. On a literal level, Bean's reluctance to recount the carnage of war and the disintegration of the male body may have arisen out of respect for the families of the men at home as well as censorship restrictions. Symbolically, his decision to write about the bodies of men as unified and impenetrable can be aligned to a fear about moral decay and defeat, given the conflation of the individual with national identity endowing individual instances of heroism with a universality.

Australian screen adaptations since 1975 can be studied within a burgeoning Australian context of nationalism which coincided firstly with the renaissance of an Australian film industry and secondly, with an attempt to distance the national psyche from the Imperial ideal which has been characterised as Australia's kowtowing to British interests for much

of its history. In this way, most screen adaptations dealing with the Anzac legend present an idealised representation of specifically Australian masculinity as an oppositional force that favours Australianness and not Britishness. Such screen adaptations present the British as the powerful hegemons who exert absolute institutional power over the predicament and action of the allied forces. Simultaneously, the Anzacs are represented as the proud, fearless, anti-authoritarian figures who contest the stuffy hegemonic power of the British. Spencer Jones, writing about the play *Breaker Morant*, suggests that this renewed sense of being Australian "combined with an Australian male identity which incorporated a rugged sense of masculinity" (paragraph 3) was a fertile ground to revivify the military court-martial, and subsequent executions of Handcock and the minor poet, Morant, for Australian audiences.

Breaker Morant: **the populist progenitor of the Anzac myth**

Bruce Beresford's film *Breaker Morant* can be considered as the progenitor of the Anzac legend and alongside Weir's *Gallipoli* it has endured as a normative and definitive representation of the indomitable spirit of Australians (Reynaud "National Versions" 292). Bruce Beresford's adaptation of Kenneth Ross's play (1979) uses additional material from the 1973 novel *The Breaker* by Kit Denton and includes several scenes, including some revealing flashbacks, which are not in the original play. The play, as well as its screen adaptation, follows the Australian literary tradition established by Clark, Bolderwood, Lawson, and Paterson of celebrating a collective masculine achievement and communicating this as representative of Australian identity at large. Beresford's screen adaptation employs real historical characters to amplify two constant facets of the reformulated Australian Anzac legend since 1975. Firstly, the futility of aligning national interests with those of the British and secondly, as asserted by Daniel Reynaud, "the

Australian larrikin bushman-soldier as the epitome of Australianness" ("National Versions" 292).

Bruce Beresford's film of *Breaker Morant* refers to events that took place during the Boer War but consciously uses the Anzac motif to communicate a simplistic notion of Australian nationalism in opposition to Britishness. According to Peter Kemp, the film is "a powerful and confronting critique of a newly independent Australia's lingering dependence on the values of royalist Mother Empire" (193); amplified by the use of "Soldiers of the Queen", as the film's main musical theme. Juxtaposed with the unruly Australians who were, in the words of the eponymous hero, fighting "a new war for a new century" (1:15:37), the powerful British hegemons are presented as pragmatists whose interests are above the fate of a group of colonial soldiers. The real imperative of the British appears to be an economic one involving the natural resources of South Africa, such as the diamond industry. Harry Morant views the dichotomy between his birth country and his adopted country more clearly and suggests that the British are "trying to end it now, so they need scapegoats! Scapegoats of the bloody empire" (1:33:29). Mary Lord argues in her introduction to the play that Harry Morant, "is an Australian, with all the qualities traditionally associated with Australian heroes: he is contemptuous of authority, loyal to his mates, fearless, and like Ned Kelly, he dies 'game'" (Ross 2).

In *Breaker Morant*, Beresford presents the duality between mateship and working-class masculinity as an unchallenged component of Australian male identity and utilises this to challenge the British 'chap' masculinity. The actions of the Australian soldiers were characteristically mischievous and typical of larrikins who did not abide by the rigidity of institutions. According to Sergeant-Major Drummit, a character in the film, "the

Australians were all irregulars and they didn't take discipline very well" (Ross 40). Stylistically, the slouch hat worn by the Australian soldiers in the film becomes a metonym for Australian identity and distinguishes them as 'the other'.

Jonathan Rayner, too, writes that in *Breaker Morant,* an "Australian identity and culture was defined against the British" (15). Even though the three colonial prisoners are condemned to die, what is being condemned in the intertexts are archetypal traits of Australian masculinity such as larrikinism (Handcock), anti-authoritarianism (Morant), innocence (Witton) and the plight of the underdog (Thomas).[44] Such traits have long been considered to be attractive to an Australian audience and through earlier screen adaptations, such as *Sunday Too Far Away,* these traits are presented according to Turner as "individualistic, independent, resistant to authority and determinedly iconoclastic" ("Representing the Nation" 120).

Central to this mythologisation of Anzacs is an idealisation of innocence. This is often represented through the figure of a sacrificial young man in the homosocial company of more experienced men. The screen adaptations considered in this work propose that the sacrifice of the innocent is often enacted, nominally in the name of the national interest but, in fact, is serving the interests of others who benefit economically from such a sacrifice. In *Breaker Morant***,** the idealised innocent is George Witton who is genuinely perplexed about the impending court-martial that could send him to the firing squad. Rayner surmises that "George Witton embodies an untarnished Australian innocence, symbolic of colonial obedience to Mother country" (*Contemporary Australian Cinema* 111). Later, Witton's befuddlement is shown in a close-up, when he is looking at the older,

[44] Witton receives a last-minute reprieve because of his own age and, presumably, because the British officials could establish that he was only emulating the actions of the older, more dominant men.

more experienced men informing him that the matter has been decided and that they are to remain under close arrest until the court-martial. Morant speaks of Witton as "a good lad. You can't blame the young 'un. He only did as I told him. He just carried out *my* orders" (Ross 94). The audience's sympathy for Witton can also be attributed to the casting of Lewis Fitz-Gerald, who at 22, appears both beautiful, fragile and innocent. Contrastingly, in the play, Lt George Witton is "a large man, several years younger than Lieutenants Morant and Hancock" (Ross 10). The dashed hopes of the patriotic Witton is "concluded by the end of the film, when a long, silent shot of his distraught face reveals his sense of bewilderment and betrayal" (Jones, paragraph 3).

The four Australian men involved in the court-martial in *Breaker Morant* demonstrate a culturally-specific form of desirable masculinity that can be located within the Australian context. This pertains to men who are seen, above all else, as active and as battlers: "the amalgamation of the period and male-centred narrative strains propounds the expression of national character through images of masculinity, by concentrating on historical examples of male martyrdom" (Rayner 110).

Bryan Brown plays the laconic Australian battler Peter Handcock with dignity and assuredness, in what has become one of the most iconic representations of masculinity in Australian cinema history. This is connected to his embodiment of an Australian soldier as not only virile, brave and courageous but at the same time, cynical and laconic. When Handcock first learns that Major Thomas's only experience as a solicitor is in writing wills, he remarks in a deadpan fashion that "might come in handy" (12:23). Handcock's virility and physical prowess is established when shaving and exposing his strong physique, possibly prompting Geoff Mayer to propose that Brown "has supplanted Jack Thompson as the actor most epitomising the Australian male" (46). Beresford's film

expands the character of Handcock by including several scenes with his wife in Australia that reveal the economic imperative of his decision to join the Bushveldt Carbineers and not in order "to keep the empire together" (10:34). Other flashbacks, include comical scenes sketching Handcock's sexual liaisons and used to underline his rampant heterosexuality:

> Sunday was a good day for chasing a few tarts around Bathurst. Everyone else was at church. I used to whip down the river bank, for a bit of smooching. Worse thing about dying. No more girls (1:04:50).

Above all, Handcock is an archetypal Australian soldier loyal to his mates and sceptical of authority (Wilcox 104). He is presented as the pragmatic larrikin amongst the three accused, one who is aware of his skills, shortcomings and responsibilities:

> I don't have spit and polish. I am an officer because I know horses and I can pick fightin' men. And I'll tell you I didn't come to this war because of any bloody Empire. I came because things were crook on the farm and there was no work around at home and I've got a wife and kids to feed (Ross 55).

His lack of faith in any institution, including religion, is demonstrated when he rejects any spiritual solace shortly before his execution. Handcock's last outcry, "Australia Forever, Amen" (1:32:30), demonstrates his patriotism, signalling to the audience the central intent of the film and clearly marks him as an irrepressible larrikin. Larrikinism, as a desirable trait of Australian masculinity even in the face of annihilation and inexplicable loss and futility, remains the only aspect of the Anzac legend that is unchallenged in screen texts even though only one representation of a larrikin, that of Paul Hogan's Pat Cleary in *Anzacs*, actually survives the war.

Australia's sacred text: Peter Weir's *Gallipoli*

When seen in their totality, Australian screen adaptations dealing with nationhood coalesce masculine identity with that of being an Australian, [con]fusing gender and nationalism, presenting men as "physically strong, rugged, with chiselled features that suggest experience of the world and a manner that warns 'don't mess with me'" (Enker 218). Such portrayals, etched deep within the Australian psyche, coincide with the expectations that audiences have of Australian men (Rayner 95). Certainly, *Gallipoli* endorses the notion that rural Australians, as embodied by Archy Hamilton, were more physically able as soldiers than their allied counterparts and thus the death of Hamilton at the conclusion of the film, has become synonymous with the notion of sacrifice.

The fusion of mateship and nationalism has long been characteristic of the Australian psyche and both Peter Weir's film and Jack Bennet's novelisation have ensured its lasting resonance in popular culture. Weir's film *Gallipoli* recalls a pivotal moment in the country's collective history when, as noted by many commentators including Tom O'Regan, the nation "came of age" (19). James Sabine agrees, commenting that the film is rendered all the more tragic "by the resonant impact of the Anzac legend on our collective national unconscious" (195). This is established at the outset of the film in its first frame: black background with red old-fashioned font playing over elegiac music. Albinoni's "Adagio in G Minor for Strings and Organ Continuo" is heard four times throughout the film always at times of great emotion and turmoil and its utilisation bestows effective gravitas to the narrative[45].

[45] Even though 18th Century Venetian composer Tomaso Albinoni is widely attributed as the composer of the mournful and elegiac piece, its real composer is 20th century Albinoni scholar, Remo Giazotto, who composed it based on a fragment he had discovered. This is serendipitous, since the film too has been adapted from an earlier source; events in the past.

In a 'special feature' included in the DVD of the film, Peter Weir describes how he was inspired to make the film whilst visiting the Gallipoli peninsula and asserts that the film must be seen as "a recreation of a true event – it's not fiction, it did happen". Following his trip to Turkey, Weir re-read C. E. W. Bean's *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914–1918* and identified a single sentence in Bean's work as the adaptive catalyst for his film: "Wilfred... was last seen running forward like a schoolboy in a foot-race, with all the speed he could muster."[46] Bean asserts that "most nations practise the cult of some ideal manhood" (Melksham 39) which can be explicated in this film through the amalgamation of idealised masculinity and national identity combined in battle.

Ken Inglis claims that Weir's film "probably reached more people than any other evocation of Anzac" (12), no doubt aided by its inclusion on the History curriculum in most Australian schools over the last thirty-five years. The film has become a reservoir of intertexual echoes, a symphonic accretion of palimpsestic inscriptions, so much so that the 2014 film, *The Water Diviner*, also born from an oft-overlooked line by Bean, is seen by many as a sequel to Weir's film. *Gallipoli* also replays the dichotomy between Australianness and Britishness. For Daniel Reynaud, *Gallipoli* contains:

> all the essential elements of the Anzac and Australian myth: the importance of sport, the anti-British sentiment, the metaphorical use of the Australian landscape, but most of all the bushmen archetypes, including the wowser and the larrikin, the emphasis on mateship, and the almost complete absence of women (119).

[46] Private Wilfred Harper of the 10th Light Horse who died during the attack at the Nek (7 August, 1915) is the prototype for the character of Archy Hamilton in *Gallipoli*.

Central to this mythologisation of Anzacs is an idealisation of innocence. The white privileged boy Hamilton is perhaps the definitive idealisation of innocence and sacrifice. His athleticism, particularly his ability to run faster than most can ride, first establishes Hamilton's idealised character as worthy of encapsulating the nation's heroic sacrifice at Gallipoli. The film is careful to differentiate running from an individual endeavour and unite it to a larger context when Hamilton informs his Uncle, "running's not all there is to life" (00:08:40). Hamilton's idealism and sacrifice are again demonstrated when he refuses the offer of becoming a runner for Major Barton and implores him instead to use Frank Dunne. Hamilton's altruistic act saves his mate's life, exemplifying the assertion by Sophie Watson and Rosemary Pringle that:

> Australia has a long tradition of male 'mateship', and bases its national identity on the doing of these mates, the 'diggers' at Gallipoli. Women are largely excluded from the national myths that legitimise the Australian state. Australian egalitarianism is essentially of a masculine variety (232).

For Annette Blonski, *Gallipoli* constitutes "the purest expression of a nostalgia for Australian identity that resides in some Elysian past of masculine beauty, Anglo-Celtic purity and bonding through war or the trials of the bush" (50). But for most commentators, Hamilton's last run is not only brave and representative of the spirit that was drummed into him by his Uncle Jack, but more importantly, it is "transformative, signifying the metamorphosis of the individual loner of colonial times into the national archetype" (Melksham 45). Weir freezes this final frame as a dignified way to signal to the viewer that this is indeed a "moment that idealises the ANZAC myth" (Melksham 46), akin to a war memorial.

Hamilton, the embodiment of landed gentry, is justifiably proud of his athleticism and his skills as a horseman. As Fig. 20 illustrates, an English official upon seeing the Australians train in Egypt, before they embark for Gallipoli remarks, "fittest crowd I've ever seen… an English officer—the Lancashires, I think—got quite lyrical. Said they reminded him of, ah, young gods" (Bennett 162).

The physical attractiveness that is recalled by the English officer is also displayed in the bathing scene in the film which is redolent of a number of Australian artworks. Coad suggests this functions as a denotation of the possibility of eroticism and sensuality between the two men. He particularly notes Dunne's inability to ride a horse as indicative of his status as 'less than virile' and that his naked body, particularly his buttocks "becomes the passive object of the viewers' desire" (110).

Fig 20. A screenshot from Weir's film, *Gallipoli* (00:59:03). British and Australian officers watching the Australian soldiers –a 'literal' reiteration that masculinity in society is under surveillance and performed for the scrutiny of other men.

Many commentators including Melkshaw (43) have highlighted the symbolism surrounding Hamilton's idealism, youthfulness, innocence and sacrifice, but most of all his attractiveness, and his symbolic function as an embodiment of Australia's status as a young country attempting to establish itself as a nation. Rayner asserts that, "Weir's attempt to pinpoint the type of men who went to the war becomes a mythic exploration of the country that produced them" (128). As emphasised by Connell for men to enjoy, or to aspire to a hegemonic masculinity, they must retain an idealised body that is "preserved and impenetrable" (*Masculinities* 185). This fear of penetration, that can take many forms, may account for the extreme homophobia that abounds in the smattering of Australian adaptations dealing with non-normative sexuality. When the body is penetrated by a spear or a bullet, however, a heroic stoicism is needed to reiterate the importance and 'sanctity' of the male body and to allow the penetration to be transformed into an act of sacrifice. Tom O'Regan astutely observes that the final scene

Fig. 21. A still from Peter Weir's film with Mel Gibson and Mark Lee echoing iconic art images of Anzacs. Note the scophophilic gaze endowed on the privileged figure of the young Anzac on the right, at the foreground of the image (1:16:15).

of *Gallipoli*, when Hamilton's body is penetrated by a volley bullets, constitutes an 'iconic masculinity… a privileged marker of a public and collective identity" (132).[47] Catriona Elder notes that the penultimate scene of Weir's film reinforces the status of men as rural workers battling for a common cause (52) and by doing so makes the sacrificial scene that follows it "emblematic of the bush-battler's ethos of making a virtue out of defeat" (Collins and Davis 77).

Through the character of Hamilton, the filmmaker explores the death of innocence and he extrapolates from this individual demise of innocence, a metaphor for Australia. David Coad suggests that virile diggers, like the ones we encounter in Weir's film, are another manifestation of the archetypal Australian bushman (11). The impenetrability, toughness, resilience and might of the male Australian body gains special resonance in Weir's *Gallipoli* through its transfiguration into the body of national warrior. Established early in the film, through the athleticism of the two leads, individual achievement is subsumed into a great nationalistic collective and becomes synonymous with the unbridled masculine energy that Australians embraced in battle at Gallipoli.

Historicity, innocence and idealism in Robert Connolly's *Balibo*

Australian screen adaptations released in the 21st century preserve some of the positive attributes and characteristics associated with the Anzacs but also constitute a challenge to the ossified definition of the Anzac patriots. They achieve this by acknowledging the heterogeneity of Anzacs and by defusing the demonisation of the 'other'. In doing so, such screen adaptations also delicately challenge the myth of traditional Australian masculinity, associated with the privileged archetypal white-male.

[47] inspired by Robert Capra's photograph of "The Fallen Soldier".

Laurence Lerner argues that history alone cannot provide the truth about monumental past conflicts because the representation of past events is always influenced by the ideological agenda of the historian (334). Likewise, Deborah Cartmell and IQ Hunter propose one's knowledge and understanding of the past is influenced as much by its representation in texts as it is by ideological agendas (1). Texts set in the past, they argue, have always assumed a postmodern approach in how they reconfigure and represent the past for audiences seeing it not as a, "dull chronicle but as a dynamic resource for exciting stories and poetic, uplifting truths" (2). Richard J. Evans claims that postmodern history, "has restored individual human beings to history, where social science approaches had more or less written them out" (248). This can be amplified so much more vividly through the process of adaptation, where historical accounts are transformed into a narrative, focusing on the experiences of a select group of characters.

Evans's claim is evident in the Robert Connolly film adaptation of *Balibo* which applies a number of production strategies to highlight the historic veracity of the narrative. Foremost amongst these, the film, essentially a thriller, also uses the tropes of the observational documentary mode to constantly remind the audience of its claims of verisimilitude. The director is aided in establishing this by the decision of the cinematographer Tristan Milani to shoot the scenes involving the Balibo Five with the Angenieux lenses which were routinely used by documentarians in the 1970s.[48] In contrast, the remainder of *Balibo* was filmed using modern lenses to reiterate its status as a contemporary thriller (Cunningham 152). The non-diegetic music used in the film is recognizably East Timorese "played by Timorese artists" (O'Hara 16), which adds another layer of authenticity. Finally, its casting was another way through which the film

[48] The five journalists killed by Indonesian forces in East Timor were: Brian Peters, 29, Malcolm Rennie, 28, Gary Cunningham, 27, Gregory Shackleton, 29, and Anthony Stewart, 21.

seeks to establish veracity: by casting actors who were the same age as the characters they played and actors who "felt like they had to get permission to play those men" (Cunningham 152).

In *Balibo*, innocence and idealism intermingle in another act of heroic sacrifice. Again, the beneficiaries of this sacrifice are the faceless global hegemons, ensconced in their respective political domains in Indonesia and Australia. Roger East, the mature journalist who comes to East Timor to locate the missing Australian journalists, is the embodiment of idealism and Tony Stewart, the younger of the Balibo 5 journalists, is the embodiment of innocence; both are sacrificed at the end of the narrative in order to not compromise the 'Batik diplomacy' espoused by the then Australian government.[49] East, in fact, views the mission of searching for the missing journalists as an opportunity to recapture his waning idealism. According to director Robert Connolly, Anthony LaPaglia, playing East:

> was really interested in how men respond to men. Horta seduces East, basically.

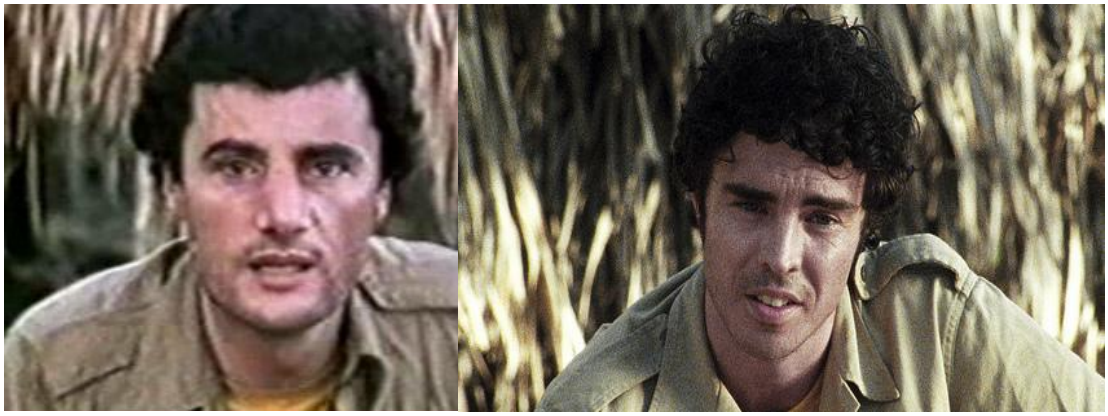

Fig. 22. [left] Australian journalist Greg Shackleton, killed in Balibo aged 29. Australian actor Damon Gameau was 29 when he portrayed Shackleton in Connolly's *Balibo*.

[49] A phrase routinely attributed to then Prime Minister Gough Whitlam by writers, historians and journalists like Joliffe in *Balibo*.

> In those early scenes he's seducing this older man. He's cast his spell and Anthony was very interested in that, not in terms of dealing with any issues of sexuality (Cunningham 156).

The relationship between the two men is telling and a fine demonstration of how regional and global enactments of masculinity intercept. The thriller unfolds simultaneously both as a buddy movie and a 'bromance' reaching its apotheosis when Horta offers East a seat on the plane which is to shortly ferry him away from Dili, and into the pages of history. East refuses, maintaining his journalistic code is stronger than his personal survival and in choosing to stay behind, East's decision can be interpreted as a sublimation of the bond between the two men. East tells the younger man, "if I leave there will be no journalists left… who's going to tell your story?" (56:46). This story is not only the story of the birth of Timor-Leste, as a nation, but also the story of sacrifice of Australian innocence, once again, on foreign shores, as recounted in Weir's *Gallipoli*.[50] Tony Stewart, the last of the Balibo Five to be executed, is the embodiment of idealised youth. As the youngest of the Balibo Five he has already witnessed the brutal execution of his four older colleagues and he needs to find the inner strength to face his certain death. He is serene and accepting of his impending fate, which approximates a spiritual acceptance and invites comparisons with Hamilton's acceptance of his sacrifice in Weir's urtext. Stewart's death is presented in a brutal, and chthonic manner, without any music or slow-motion photography to ameliorate the shocking impact on the audience.

An equally complex character who never questions the legitimacy of his quest or his allegiance to Australia, is the figure of the idealistic journalist East in *Balibo*, described as

[50] Tony Stewart was posthumously awarded a Presidential Merit of Honour medal by Timor-Leste President Jose Ramos-Horta in 2012.

"strongly anti-British and anti-monarchist" (Jolliffe 42). Ruth Balint notes that LaPaglia's interpretation of East is contrary to the conventional wisdom of presenting "foreign correspondents as courageous and intrepid fighters for the truth" (15). East, at 52, is unfit and suffers from several physical ailments in stark contrast to the idealised bodies of Anzac warriors encountered in *Gallipoli* that were compared to classical Gods. Rjurik Davidson describes East's enactment of masculinity as redemptive, adding that the character "moves from disillusionment to a reawakened conscience under the influence of events" ("Balibo" 24). The film rejects Hollywood thriller tropes and the enactment of hegemonic masculinity of white men as saviours and heroes in complex geopolitical struggles disseminated in films like *Air Force One* (1997). Instead, it presents a flawed hero who sacrifices himself out of empathy with the oppressed and marginalised ethnic minority as a moral response to a complex dilemma.

The forgotten hero: *Parer's War*

Another recent Australian screen adaptation dealing with masculinity and nationhood demonstrates how different perceptions of masculinity can abound simultaneously, proving Raewyn Connell's belief that hegemonic masculinities are only a relational and evolving concept and not a definitive category. Even though *Parer's War* (2014), directed by Alister Grierson and adapted from the 2012 Neil McDonald biography *Kokoda Front Line!*, deals with WWII, it still employs the legend of the Anzac warrior at its core. Damien Parer's nationalistic fervour was intertwined with his perception of the bond fostered in a regiment of men as sacred and honourable. As outlined in McDonald's text,

Parer was not only courageous in accepting the dangers confronting a war correspondent during WWII, but was willing to share "the dangers of the soldiers" (93).[51]

Early in his career, according to the McDonald hagiography, Parer was determined to "build a true picture of the Australian soldier in movies and stills" (43), believing this to be part of his patriotic duty: to provide "an immortal portrait of the Australian soldier in this war" (McDonald 354) in his films. Parer endured illness bravely alongside his fellow Australian soldiers, suffering from a host of ailments such as dysentery and malaria and he was instrumental in better preparing Australian soldiers for jungle warfare through the provision of camouflage green trousers and long sleeves and by advocating the application of anti-insect repellent at regular intervals. Parer's main impetus, even when he was confronting an inflexible bureaucracy in Canberra, was to ensure that Australian images and Australian stories continued to be enacted on the silver screen:

> "Damien started to walk backwards to film the faces of the advancing troops. Then a burst of machine-gun fire from a concealed pill box ripped into him. The camera spun out of his hands as he crashed to the ground" (McDonald 348).

Parer's allegiance was foremost on the side of the men who were involved in the actual fighting and he was critical of officialdom, which he considered as self-serving and as the oppressor of the real heroes on the battlefront. Even though "the army also came to recognise the importance of the newsreel" (McDonald 243) and the Department of Information used Parer's work for propaganda purposes, they still actively attempted to curtail his popularity, which they saw as a threat to their own interests, by denying him the means he needed so he could perform his duties in a manner that he saw fit. Even

[51] Parer was the first Australian to win an Academy Award for his film, *Kokoda Front Line*!

though Parer saw himself as a proud Australian, he was often powerless when confronted with the faceless bureaucrats whose priority was to protect the innocent Australian public from exposure to the brutality of war, thereby safeguarding the flow of volunteers to the fighting. So, ironically, the more Parer perfected his photographic art by finding more ingenious ways to communicate the verisimilitude of battle and its impact on soldiers, the less his work became palatable for the propagandist purposes of Canberra's Department of Information, which in turn, systematically attempted to defuse Parer's popularity.

In detailing Parer's struggles with the bureaucracy, the screen adaptation presents him as an archetypal larrikin underdog who finds himself in a position he had not anticipated, that is, accepting his genius and using this to improve conditions for the soldiers he comes to respect as mates.

Pacifism and the *Accidental Soldier*

Since its release, Weir's film of *Gallipoli* has maintained its stranglehold on the national imagination as the definitive representation of Australian male masculinity, particularly regarding bravery, sacrifice, valour and mateship. Its imprimatur still holds given the relative failings of several recent releases such as *Anzac Girls* (2014), *An Accidental Soldier* (2013), *Deadline Gallipoli* (2014) and the miniseries of *Gallipoli* (2015) all of which attempted to challenge the Anzac legend of heroism and unbridled nationalism. These adaptations were critically received but largely failed to resonate with the viewing audience.

The status of hegemonic masculinity is often considered to be the privileged domain of the heroic, white, Anglo-Celtic Australian male soldier, but as an examination of various

screen adaptations between 1975 and 2015 has shown, the archetypal Anzac warrior has enjoyed none of the privileges normally associated with dominant masculinity. Moreover, his participation in conflict can be viewed as complicit, since it only advances the interests of others. Kate Aubusson claims that Australians are "a nation of anti-heroes, of outlaws, swagmen and hanged men. Gallipoli is our opus to hard-knocks" (par. 1). Furthermore, a scrutiny of more recent adaptations, reveals that the archetypal legendary Australian warriors were not culturally homogenous as can be extrapolated from adaptations in the 1970s and 1980s but rather, they were a diverse, complex and inclusive group, incorporating different manifestations of masculinities that are better aligned with subjugated and marginalised masculinities. Such representations of alternative masculinities can be observed through the figures of Aboriginal fighters, the participation of Australians soldiers from ethnic backgrounds, those of a non-normative sexual orientation as well as those who advocate pacifism.

For instance, the adaptation of *Silent Parts* (2006), "one of the most poignant and unusual of reflections on war and remembrance" (Pierce "Silent Parts" par. 3), into *An Accidental Soldier* is a resonant addition to the contrapuntal examination of the Anzac spirit. More importantly, it bravely allows pacifism to assume a central place in the narrative as a reasoned response to the insanity of warfare. Rachel Ward's film dispenses with the dual timeframe of the novel and concentrates on the isolated protagonist's plight in a world which expects him to enact a certain performance of authorised masculinity.[52]

Blundell in "Virgin Soldier Finds Love" reminds his readers that Australian wars "are not only about self-sacrifice and mateship but also fear, folly and terrible frailty" (par. 5). In

[52] In *Silent Parts*, historical researcher Julie attempts to come to terms with her family's ancestry and is concerned with uncovering whether her mysterious uncle Harry was an ANZAC hero or a deserter.

the John Charalambous novel, poverty and blind patriotism are proffered as deciding factors in forming Australian attitudes to war, whereas poverty has only been subtly intimated in earlier adaptations as a reason why young men enlisted. Harry Lambert, the protagonist of *Silent Parts*, is not the young idealised man the public has encountered in previous Anzac texts. Instead he is a man confident of his own views who reflects on his family history and how his English relations "had dreamt of bright red coats and marching into battle" (73). Accordingly, Lambert's relations in Australia, through omission and machinations, contrive to reify his legacy and personal history to one of sacrifice thus perpetuating this notion of heroism. Actor Dan Spielman, who portrayed Lambert in *An Accidental Soldier*, reflects:

> the Australian military myth is a very powerful one; the notion of mateship, of camaraderie, of glory in battle has formed a big part of our psyche. And I think it is a very exclusive myth in a lot of ways and there's not a lot of room allowed by the general Australian public to see all of the contradictions and mysteries within it (Yeap par. 14).

The Ward adaptation is a poignant one, a kind of "memorial that emphasises the pity of war rather than its nobility" (Blundell 2013). *Silent Parts* presents the clearest challenge to the Anzac myth through the protagonist Lambert who is forty-two when he enlists. In Chapter 10, the first instance of a first-person narrative, belonging to Colombe Jactatot, the protagonist's saviour and subsequent lover, we are privy to a less than complimentary physical description of Lambert who is likened to a plough horse, "one who'd seen better days and was ready for the butcher" (101) [53]. Indifferent to the estimation of

[53] In Ward's adaptation, *An Accidental Soldier*, Harry Lambert is played by Australian theatre actor, Dan Spielman who was 34 at the time of filming and could hardly be described as an ageing plough horse.

others, Lambert admits he possesses a "timid' heart (4) and on reflecting on his own masculinity, Lambert identifies three prototypes of masculinity in Australian men: good blokes, cockheads and mugs. His awareness of masculinity as a construct, a socially-acquired form of identity, is revealed when Lambert ruminates that his own father was aware of the need to "go about with such a broad and sincere smile on his face" (77) in order to maintain his position within the confined homosocial order of his Victorian townsfolk. Lambert's decision to join the war effort following his mother's death was not due to a nascent feeling of nationalism but rather because of the harassment from his neighbours who Lambert believes, "privately despised him" (114) for failing to live up to their expectations of dominant masculinity.

Lambert does not confront the might of the German forces since he is dispatched to the Field Bakeries South, near Rouen, conveniently located near the Cordier property, where the beloved family rose, 'Frau Karl Druschki', was created. [54] Lambert's search for the rose, "recently taken in hand by patriotic nurserymen and relaunched as White American Beauty" (13) can be seen as a metonym for "the redemptive force of beauty amid the horror of war", as suggested by Ingrid Wassenaar (par. 7). Even though Lambert, had enlisted at the mature age of forty-two his views on warfare are clear. He considers, "the army was a sort of suicide" (Charalambous 5).

Lambert's desertion is presented along physiological terms, "a bodily revolt against months of obedience and self-abnegation" (Charalambous 42). Once he flees from the frontline, Lambert finds refuge in a country cottage and is hidden by Jactatot, who is the novel's co-narrator. When Jactatot brings Lambert a two-week old English language

[54] This rose was created by German rose hybridizer, Peter Lambert, who shares his surname with the protagonist of the adaptation intertexts.

newspaper he savours its contents and the cadences of the language but treats the news from the war contemptuously, acknowledging what he is reading as "the same cheery propaganda, multiplied over and over" (Charalambous 96). The narrator of the Charalambous's novel confronts his pacifism explicitly:

> He's not repentant. He's alive. … He's the living Adam, small, mortal, instinctively resisting the great annihilation. Words such as *pacifist* and *conscientious objector* solidify in his mind, words than in insular Rushburn had the same pejorative weight as *shirker* but now seem to offer a way out. He could have said no (199).

Lambert's actions, however, are not endorsed or accepted by all characters. Captain Terence Foster, played by Bryan Brown, is a lawyer assigned to defend Lambert in his court-martial who is appalled by his desertion. The casting of Brown is deliberate because he provides a rallying-point for traditional depictions of desirable Australian hegemonic masculinity having played such roles in *Breaker Morant*, *A Town Like Alice* and *The Odd Angry Shot*. Foster considers Lambert to be a "despicable excuse of a man… disgrace to the forces. Disgrace to the British race. Unconscionable cowardice. A danger to his fellows" (Charalambous 253-4).

A centenary of the Anzac legend: Inclusivity and Ivin's *Gallipoli*

The representation of Anzacs as physical warriors, akin to classical Greek Gods, has endured in screen texts until the first decade of the twenty-first century, when adaptations such as *The Water Diviner,* Glendyn Ivin's *Gallipoli* and *An Accidental Soldier* disclosed the actual physical carnage associated with wars, revealing that soldiers and their bodies are maimed, amputated, killed, blown to pieces, drowned or frozen to death.

Even Charles Bean, the most conservative WWI chronicler, has questioned the Anzac warrior's status as a paragon of ideal masculinity by describing him as possessing an almost feminine sensitivity (7) but this comment has been largely ignored in the annals of the Anzac legend. That is until recently, through Kodi Smit-McPhee's sensitive characterisation of Tolly Johnson, in the 2015 miniseries of *Gallipoli.* It could be argued, the decision to choose a complex protagonist as the narrator of the miniseries – someone who, rejects the heroism of battle and someone who, as the long campaign progresses becomes increasingly disillusioned with his previously-held ideals, values, and attitudes – may have accounted for the commercial failure for the Nine Network that broadcast the miniseries.

Ivin's *Gallipoli* further challenges the Anzac legend through a mature exploration of masculinity and its nexus to identity and nationhood. Steve Dow reports that both the writer and director of the 2015 miniseries were cognisant of the influence that Weir's film of *Gallipoli* holds, in framing the Anzac legend in the consciousness of Australians. Ivin presents an all-encompassing, sombre and elegiac representation of the entire Gallipoli expedition right from the first landing on April 25, 1915, to the last day of the Anzac involvement. Johnson, the protagonist of Ivin's text, immediately dashes the audience's expectation of heroism in the first episode of the miniseries as he narrates in his voice-over, "on that first day the King, the Empire and doing the right thing seemed a long way off" (Ivin Ep1, 8:12). The miniseries argues that Australian men enlisted in good faith because they viewed themselves as transplanted Britons, a view that Les Carlyon, the writer of the book *Gallipoli* that serves as the hypotext to the television, shares (134). Carlyon further explains that Australians embarked on this dangerous military operation "carefree, as full of dreams as a debutante going to a ball" (133),

suggesting that they were, at the very least, complicit with the interests of the British Empire by embarking on a war with a country that had showed no direct enmity towards Australia and its sovereignty.

The narrative in Ivin's text develops through the participation of a small group of Australian mates and their commanding officers, representative of all Anzacs, and who see themselves as equals to the rest of the Allied forces. Even the most ineffectual of British commanders, Sir Ian Hamilton, played by John Bach, confides to journalist Bean, "I wanted to say something about the ANZAC men, Bean. They are splendid fellows and they have exceeded all my expectations… they will be remembered" (Ep 7, 42:03). Craig Mathieson in "Hindsight: Gallipoli" observes that Ivin's text is not at all nationalistic, but rather a "darker, striking and more complete examination of this country's past" (par. 11). Graeme Blundell similarly asserts that Ivin's text "gives us the squalid truths in a vivid encounter with the metaphysical" (par. 3). This is communicated most poignantly in the text as winter approaches in the long Gallipoli campaign and the audience is presented with numerous depictions of the hundreds of soldiers who either froze during active duty, or who drowned.

Blundell is not alone in claiming that the myth of Gallipoli has played an important role in the formation and perception of "national identity". The accretion of heroic representations of the digger, and particularly 'his' sacrifices in adaptations such as *Anzacs* (1985), *1915* (1982) and *The Light Horsemen* (1987), have created a contrapuntal effect in the audience's understanding of Gallipoli as a metonym for the nation. In Ivin's *Gallipoli*, the newest screen embodiment of the Anzac hero, Bevan Johnson, Tolly's brother, played by Harry Greenwood, is a resolute, brave and heedless young man and aptly represents the avid nationalist who has enlisted to fight for the prosperity and

continuation of the British Empire. Johnson believes that it is his duty, as an Australian, to not only protect the King, but more importantly, to safeguard his mates and particularly his younger brother who, at seventeen, should not have enlisted. Interestingly, the patriotic Johnson is the first character to comment on the dishonourable conduct of the war which forced both sides to shoot rather than detain, hostages, "I didn't think I'd be killing blokes trying to surrender". Craig Mathieson claims that the Gallipoli campaign is better understood as a symbol of nationhood rather than "the unchecked carnage behind the reassuring mythology" (par. 5).

Tolly Johnson's traversal from adolescence to manhood is played out within the homosocial order of men in the context of war. Throughout the miniseries, Johnson's actions of courage and ingenuity in battle are recognised and he is duly rewarded with two promotions which, on both occasions, he is reluctant to accept, claiming "I'm just a bloke" (E2 34:57). Instead of relishing these acts of recognition, Johnson is disappointed because he views these promotions as mechanisms by which the hegemony of the army hierarchy regenerates and supports itself. Tellingly, his innocent belief that he has joined up to fight honourably alongside his brother for 'King and Country' is dashed on the first day of the Gallipoli landing, when reluctantly and clumsily, Johnson kills his first Turkish soldier. This is communicated to the audience in a widescreen cinematic manner – see Fig. 23. Then, Johnson's contemplative, melancholic and elegiac voice-over traces his loss of innocence as the carnage amasses from April to December. This is supported by the mournful non-diegetic score of Stephen Rae, achieved mainly through the use of stringed instruments.

As part of his self-actualisation, as a man and a soldier, Johnson confronts his loss of religious certainty and acknowledges his nascent pacifism. The former occurs through his

tragic realisation, following a conversation with the worldly Dave in Episode Five, that the Christian and the Muslim God is "the same bloke" (1:02:01). Indicating his growing despondency, Johnson informs the audience in a voice-over, "I'd only been a soldier for five hours but it felt like a mess to me" (E1 08:34) and, poignantly, this line anticipates the final sentences of Carlyon's hypotext:

> After a few days the corpses of the Australians lying at the Nek began to stink. Swarms of flies crawled over them. Three months later, only skeletons remained. Skeletons with packs on their backs and rifles nearby. Men from Victoria's Western District and the wheat lands of Western Australia. Carrion on some foreign field (500).

In a departure from previous adaptations in Ivin's *Gallipoli* (2015) inclusivity is utilised by

Fig. 23. This screenshot from *Gallipoli* shows Tolly's apotheotic moment when he realises that the grand narrative of war is contrary to his personal and spiritual beliefs (Disc 1, 06: 53)

the producers of the miniseries as a way of representing a multitude of different manifestations of masculinity, and in doing so, challenges the prevailing Anzac legend of bravery and sacrifice as being the exclusive domain of Anglo-Celtic young men.

When Johnson volunteers to be a sniper, it is Billy Sing, the famous historical figure of a super sniper who has been called 'The Assassin' or 'The Murderer', who mentors him. The inclusion of the Asian-Australian character (played by James Stewart) and his contribution to the Gallipoli campaign is significant because in previous incarnations of the Anzac legend, such as in Weir's *Gallipoli*, the input of non-Anglo-Celtic Australians have been absent. Similarly, another previously marginalised figure from the Anzac mythology, has been the Aboriginal soldier. Ivin's miniseries includes the positive representation of a Wadjari character, Thomas "Two Bob" King, played by Dion Williams, whom Johnson first meets while they are both recuperating in hospital in Cairo. King serves as a reminder for the audience to appreciate the contribution of Australian Aboriginal soldiers who, typically have been routinely omitted from historical accounts of wars. Carlyon observes that Australian solders who identified as Aboriginal were not allowed to volunteer at first, but later, as demand for more recruits exceeded supply, this policy was sidelined and Aboriginal soldiers were paid the same wage and were subject to the same rules as other soldiers. When King dies, his fellow soldiers, out of respect for his atheism and his Aboriginality, improvise his burial. Lacking the knowledge of the appropriate funeral rites for an Aboriginal man, the young men join in an improvised rendition of the folk ballad, "The Dying Stockman."

Inclusivity is also demonstrated through the character of Dave Klein, played by Sam Parsonson. Klein represents the educated Australian digger, whose knowledge of history, religion, mythology, and literature astounds and surprises Johnson and his fellow

soldiers. Klein is the embodiment of the reluctant soldier, whose belief in humanity crosses racial barriers and accounts for his pacifism. after a month of fighting Klein, a conscientious objector, manages to stay alive and not shoot anyone. He only fires at an enemy soldier, killing him, when the enemy is about to shoot Tolly Johnson. The growing affection that Klein displays towards Johnson surpasses the homosocial bond of mateship with the text suggesting that it may be seen as romantic.

Ivin's miniseries can be viewed as a sombre extended echo of the 1981 feature film of the same name, since it features all the major battles in the Gallipoli Campaign. Weir's film restricts its representation of the horror of war to the Battle of the Nek. Tellingly, whereas Weir only implies that the massacre of Australian troops at this battle was senseless, the newer text proclaims that "this is murder." (E1 1:34:54)

The commercial failure of Ivin's *Gallipoli* in Australia is not an isolated incidence. *Balibo* too, failed to recoup its 4.5 million-dollar-budget whilst the 2010 film, *Beneath Hill 60* directed by Jeremy Sims, only earned half of its eight-million budget in Australia. Similarly, *The Railway Man* (2013) directed by Jonathan Teplizsky only earned 4 million dollars of its eighteen-million-dollar budget despite a worldwide release. All of these screen texts were critically acclaimed because of the complex and nuanced way they handled their subject matter. Furthermore, they all adhere to the formula of a successful war film as outlined by Lawrence Suid in *Guts & Glory: The Making of the American Military Image in Film* (2007). This includes a focus on a group of diverse men, obstinate officers and ordinary men who become heroic or die battling for a higher objective (116). Jeanine Basinger extends this formula, by stipulating that successful war films also include an innocent character who undergoes a process of initiation (par. 19).

What can account for the commercial success of war films is certainly an interesting arena for future researchers but in my research I have observed that military success appears to be an integral factor. [55] This observation can be supported by the considerable success of American films such as, *Zero Dark Thirty* (2012) directed by Kathryn Bigelow and *American Sniper*, directed by Clint Eastwood in 2014.

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This chapter has firstly examined the idealisation and fetishisation of the Anzac hero that drew heavily on the mythology surrounding the Outback working-class battler and took place within a flourishing Australian context of nationalism. The chapter then proceeded to outline how the Anzac hero has been reconfigured in the national imagination in the context of postcolonialism, pacifism and multiculturalism. Screen adaptations in the 21st century Australia, such as Ivin's *Gallipoli*, Ward's *An Accidental Soldier* and Connolly's *Balibo*, all explicitly demonstrate that aspiring to the status of national warrior does not always bestow the commensurate patriarchal dividend to its subjects. Such an outcome was only subtly signalled in earlier adaptations such as Beresford' *Breaker Morant* and Weir's *Gallipoli*. It can be deduced that men involved in military conflict may gain the cultural kudos associated with the legendary status of Anzacs but their participation and personal sacrifice in military conflict only advances the interests of others and renders these men complicit in perpetuating the ideological agendas of more powerful members of society.

[55] Stephen Neale comments that the shift to conservative politics in the 1980s was responsible for the resurgence of military success in war films (117).

Chapter 5

The spectre of the bush and toxic masculinities

In 2000, before a global audience of three and a half billion viewers, a lone stockman channelling Banjo Paterson's 'Man from Snowy River' enters the Sydney sporting arena, that through the clever use of lighting has been transformed into the arid landscape of the Australian Outback, and cracks his stock whip. A further one hundred and twenty stockmen, enter the stadium holding the Olympic flags and form the five Olympic Rings to the rousing theme music written by Bruce Rowland, who composed the score for the 1982 film *The Man from Snowy River*. [56]

This dramatic beginning of a worldwide event signals to the audience the importance of palimpsestuous intertextuality (Hutcheon 22) that will prevail throughout the ceremony as a way of making meaning. Intertextuality is a way of connecting the text we are experiencing with other works with which we are familiar (Stam *Theory* 64). Palimpsestuous intertextuality refers to adaptations, such as the 2000 Olympic Opening Ceremony, which are not explicit and transparent reworkings of earlier texts. Rather, their connectivity to other texts is recognised and acknowledged by audiences in a knowing manner. Indeed, the pleasure of experiencing this text derives from such a recognition and knowingness of other texts. As encountered in numerous other texts, the aforementioned enactment of masculinity during the 2000 Olympic Opening Ceremony is communicated as androcentric, white, English-speaking, steeped in the mythos of the Outback and stands as the binary opposite of the feminized 'other'. This unique screen adaptation continues its intertextual dialogue with a plethora of performances of

[56] described as stockmen by the official Channel 7 commentator, even though some were women.

Australian masculinity, all of which communicated a raft of recognisable male character traits.

Olympic opening ceremonies, beginning with Barcelona in 1992, can be considered as adaptation palimpsests which, through the mythic enactment of the local culture, provide their audience with an insight into a nation's identity. The 2000 Sydney Opening Ceremony presented a narrative of Australia that was linear, and in doing so, it naturalised the dominance of white men as the embodiments of Australian identity. It did this by envisaging modern Australia through an androcentric narrative. The riders in Akubra hats parading the Australian flag, purposefully linked Australian identity with a mythopoetic representation of the bushman, prompting Jackie Hogan to comment on the intertwining of nationhood and masculinity (106). The significant number of female, Aboriginal and 'minority' performers in most sections of the 2000 Opening Ceremony could be seen as an acknowledgement of the contribution of such marginalised groups, but the selection of texts performed in this authorized panoply of nationhood, still privileged and celebrated hegemonic masculinity, that is white, male, and English-speaking.

Throughout the dazzling ceremony, the global audience was entertained by a litany of images of working-class Australian masculinity, "of stockmen, explorers, outlaws, and steelworkers overcoming natural and social obstacles to forge a new nation and a uniquely Australian character" (Hogan 115). Alongside Paterson's defiant man from Snowy River, the ceremony also channelled Ned Kelly, whose indefatigable larrikin spirit has become synonymous with protest masculinity and defiance against authority. This chapter will trace how protest masculinity and defiance against institutions which both oppress marginalised individuals, have been disseminated in key screen adaptations

between 1975 and 2015 as toxic forms of masculinity. It will also highlight how issues pertaining to marginalisation and oppression originate in issues of class, despite the latter word being the object of derision in contemporary Australia. Tim Winton ventures so far as to suggest that Australians, "have been trained to remain uncharacteristically silent about the origins of social disparity" ("The C word" 24).

As argued earlier in this work, hegemonic masculinity is best defined as a relational and fluid concept that can only exist in the context of hierarchical relations between men and women, and amongst other men. Raewyn Connell asserts that masculinity and femininity "have meaning in relation to each other, as a social demarcation and a cultural opposition" (44).[57] Shane Crilly warns of the "danger in viewing hegemonic masculinity as unitary or monolithic because social and historical contingencies ensure that it remains contradictory and divided" (9). For Connell, hegemonic masculinity is "connected with prominent institutions and cultural forms… and is extensively presented and promoted in mass media" (115) which, as argued in the Introduction, is the catalyst for this work - that is, the representation of hegemonic masculinity as an idealised construct in the Australian mass media which includes film and television.

What nearly all adaptation intertexts suggest is, that although this form of masculinity is often represented as an ideal state for men to pursue, most will not achieve it. This is partly because the masculinity and sexuality of men are not fixed positions but are complex, contradictory and ultimately a "precarious construction" (Connell 9). Hence, many adaptations dealing with the inability of men to contest hegemonic masculinities, are centred in the urban environment and around domestic spaces which they can no

[57] All page references to Connell in this chapter refer to her book *Masculinities*, unless otherwise indicated.

longer dominate; spaces that Crilly claims are "haunted by the spectre of castration" (87). As a result, their brand of masculinity is routinely enacted and communicated as toxic.

A close examination of key adaptation intertexts demonstrate how protest and defiant masculinities are closely aligned. This alignment can be viewed as providing a refuge for men who are marginalised, disempowered, or who lack patriarchal and economic dividends normally reserved for society's privileged men. Defiant masculinities offer a way of protecting males from the perceived lack of dominance that society values, with "defiance, vengeance and resentment as its steady accompaniments" (Adler 48). The adaptations examined in this chapter will also demonstrate that defiant masculinities encompass exaggerated and maltreated forms of hyper-masculinity that are routinely considered positive such as strength, resilience, and loyalty. When these are heightened to the exclusion of other traits, those often ascribed to femininity, they become toxic resulting in men frequently redirecting their anger and violence towards those whom they perceive as being responsible for their predicament. Defiant masculinities constitute a stance of insubordination against prevailing social conditions, institutions, and powerful individuals. Connell asserts that "protest masculinity is a marginalised masculinity which picks up themes of hegemonic masculinity in the society at large but reworks them in the context of poverty" (100). The adaptations under discussion here, will further suggest that defiant masculinity, with its overtones of immaturity, bravado, and masculine swagger, is futile and doomed to failure. This is because men enacting a form of toxic masculinity often do not have access to cultural and economic resources and are unable to contest patriarchal power, no matter how persistent the posturing and confidence may appear. Again, Connell insightfully observes that such men espouse "the marginality and

the stigma" (116) associated with their particular protest and, accordingly, demonstrate an exaggerated performance of their defiance towards this unequal reality.

In their review of hegemonic masculinities from a psychological perspective, Margaret Wetherell and Nigel Edley argue that men enact their masculinity in a strategic and fluid manner depending on particular socio-economic circumstances (350). At times, the most expedient way to demonstrate one's masculinity is to act in an oppositional or defiant manner to that which is expected at the local level. An example from Baz Luhrmann's intertextual treasure-trove, *Australia,* illustrates this point. The character of The Drover is an accretion of all the mythic representations of larrikins and strong Outback men and yet his beliefs about inclusivity and reconciliation politics set him apart from prevailing social norms. This is demonstrated in the film in various set pieces such as in the pub scene, where The Drover fights for the rights of his Aboriginal mate, Magarri. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt endorse this fluid strategic positioning in their article "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept", stating:

> men can dodge among multiple meanings according to their interactional needs. Men can adopt hegemonic masculinity when it is desirable; but the same men can distance themselves strategically from hegemonic masculinity at other moments. Consequently, masculinity represents not a certain type of man but, rather, a way that men position themselves through discursive practices (841).

An analysis of screen adaptations between 1975 and 2015 reveals that hegemonic masculinity is a highly esteemed enactment of Australian masculinities associated with

the values of life in the bush. Indeed, the corollary proposition is that living in urban centres somehow corrupts the moral fibre and core values of its inhabitants. Peter Pierce in his introduction to the 2009 *Cambridge History of Australian Literature* appears to endorse this notion by suggesting that a crisis in the performance of masculinity in Australia can be attributed to the movement from rural to suburban life (37). The remainder of this chapter will examine representations of masculinity as performed by men who protest against the entrapment they feel as a result of their emotional, cultural, and economic marginalisation. Such men, wield power over others and the land or defy and rally against institutions they find oppressive. In analysing representations of defiant masculinity, I concur with the work of Judith Butler. Butler, questions 'sensible' and 'natural' assumptions about the nature of sex, gender, and identity and proposes that there is very little that is inherently natural about gender. Rather, people learn to perform an authorised code of gender which is espoused by socio-historical cultural forces. An authorised performance of gender as espoused by Butler can be accommodated with the hegemonic framework of masculinities as proposed by Connell, especially in the privileged positioning that working-class masculinity occupies in the national psyche in Australia.

The mythologising of the bush

Neil Rattigan reminds his readers that "the consistent and dominant image of Australian cultural identity promulgated by the cinema is of a white male, who is nearly always Anglo-Celtic, down to earth, unsophisticated, democratic and unimpressed by authority" (16). Typically, as reinforced by the Olympic Opening Ceremony, such a man is also a "child of the mighty bush" (Franklin 231). Brian McFarlane aptly summarises traditional depictions of the bush claiming that:

> the bush was chiefly seen as a repository of specifically Australian values and challenges. It was seen as a testing-ground of manhood; as a site for struggles between man and nature, where hard-working, decent men might live with a peculiarly Australian dignity in an anti-city, anti-boss, anti-European ethos; as the setting for simple, uncorrupted egalitarian values as compared with the heartless capitalism of the cities (*Australian Cinema* 71).

Australian literature, and indeed culture, have always favoured the country over the city as a site of the authentic Australian experience even though several successful adaptation intertexts such as *We of the Never Never* (1982) can attest that the experience of living in the bush is far from edenic. John Tulloch proposes in *Legends on the Screen* (1981) that early Australian cinema established the nexus between the bush as idealised and authentic and life in the industrialised city as corruptive and oppressive. This is supported by David Carter who contends that Australian literature and culture "had its roots in the bush" (268). This way of thinking has created the mythology of the Bush, particularly the notion that non-urban Australians are more authentic, prompting the organisers of the Sydney Olympics to choose the man from Snowy River as their ambassador of Australianness to the world.

The panegyric representation of the male bush dweller/worker in Australian adaptations, as highlighted in *The Man from Snowy River*, has always been focussed on the conflict between the proletariat and the privileged employer even though, ironically, it is urban writers and artists who have used the nexus of the bushman to Australian identity hyperbolically at the end of the nineteenth century, as observed by Clive Moore ("Guest" 9). Certainly, it was colonial Australia that gave rise to Bush mythology, a colonial society governed punitively by powerful men. It could be argued that the opposition to the

violent force exercised in the jurisdiction of the colony, has remained as an essential trait of larrikin Australian males in the bush. The absence of a name for the leading man in the Paterson poem extols the alpine ranges that are his natural habitat; the landscape makes and explains him. Turner recognises that the 1982 film adaptation replicates this impulse in the poem, with the camera lovingly capturing the vast vistas of the high country (50).

The 1987 adaptation of *The Shiralee* is also uncritical of life in the bush. Its protagonist, Macauley, who throughout the novel and adaptation is referred to almost exclusively by his surname, is independent and proud and such character traits can be accounted for by Macauley's self-reliance and confidence. This assuredness is partly an accretion of his close connection to the Australian bush as well as his abnegation of city life, which he finds oppressive and stifling. When he lived in Sydney for five years, city living for Macauley was "like being in the belly of a dragon, a circus he'd never join" (Niland, 245).

In Ray Lawrence's film adaptation of *Bliss* (1985) by Australia's most acclaimed living writer Peter Carey, its protagonist Harry Joy traverses from the hell of urban life to the paradisal bliss of the Australian bush. The ambivalence of the novel's setting is dispelled in the film as the world of Joy's 'Hell' is identified as Sydney, through the various Sydney landmarks, visible throughout the narrative. More significantly, perhaps, the topography of Sydney assumes a more central role through a process of intertextuality to other screen adaptations, such as *Emerald City* (1988) and *Ruben Guthrie* (2015), as the big urban centre that thrives on vapid consumerism in a competitive patriarchal system. Through using Sydney as its setting in the adaptation of *Bliss*, Lawrence satirises the banality involved in middle-class life amid unbridled capitalism.

Joy's guide in the world of recuperation is Honey Barbara who is presented as a type of ecological angel from the bush. It is there in the bush that the deracinated Joy finally finds his roots under the protection of the forest canopy, and where he is subsequently transformed. Joy's battle for goodness can be connected to a type of territoriality: rejecting the cancer-ridden urban environment, and moving to a more rejuvenating bush setting. John Eustace comments that the evocation of the 'white' mythic Clancy is extended to the transformation of Joy from corrupt suburbanite to a bushman, at one with the spirit of the bush (113). However, Anthony J. Hassall warns that the pastoral can be viewed as a site of anxiety in Australian psyche and literature because it simultaneously serves as prison and paradise (72). This is resonant of Judith Wright's observation of the "double aspect" of living in the bush, that it can be seen both as a form of freedom as well as a type of exile (xi).

The city as a cradle of disenfranchisement

The disenfranchisement with living in the city has been a constant characteristic of Australian society since colonial times and the focus of a number of films such as *Romper Stomper* (1992) and *Chopper* (2000). The urban environment as represented in various adaptations examined in this chapter, assumes a central tension in the exegesis of the narrative and can be compared to a claim of territorialisation, as suggested by Gabrielle O'Brien (67). Two adaptations not set in the metropoles of Melbourne or Sydney, also tackle the bush and city dichotomy, suggesting that the marginalisation the characters encounter in the city is a conscious rejection of the values of the bush. These adaptations are firstly the 1998 adaptation of Andrew McGahan's *Praise*, in which the central protagonist, Gordon Buchanan, rejects all embodiments of dominant masculinity associated with his family who hail from the bush. Secondly, the 2011 adaptation of

Marshall's nonfictional text *Killing for Pleasure*, *Snowtown*, is set in the outer-northern suburbs of Adelaide, which are presented as economic and cultural wastelands. Despite the confronting subject matter of the film, the viewer is provided with sparing shots of pastoral glimpses by cinematographer Adam Arkapaw which become symbolic of the disconnection that the characters experience with the natural world.

The discontent felt by men in the city can also be attributable to this disconnection from the natural world of the bush. *The Harp in the South* adaptation intertexts examine a group of Irish-Catholic individuals who have failed to thrive in the mythical bush and have come to the Sydney slums in the 1940s. According to Paul Genoni, Irish-Catholics "constituted approximately a quarter of European population in Australia since 1788 and formed an identifiable religious, ethnic, social, political and economic subculture" (26). The 1983 adaptation of *Careful, He Might Hear You* is also set in Sydney, in the 1930s, and presents a contrasting view of life to that provided by Ruth Park's text. What both adaptations have in common is the lack of fulfilment for their respective male characters and their presentation of the city as a destructive force because it is removed from the mythical values of a life in the bush. In *Careful, He Might Hear You,* Logan Marriott, the father of the central character PS, retreats to the bush as an escape from his parental duties and responsibility.

Physiognomy and Protest masculinities

The broadcast of the Sydney Olympic Ceremony used only two concrete examples of ideal masculinity made carnate: the Lawson-inspired stockman, identified by the music as the titular man from Snowy River, and the notorious outlaw Ned Kelly. Both figures, one fictional, the other historical, have featured in several Australian screen adaptations

and both embody what film historian Tom O'Regan has described as a "hyper-Australian" masculinity (52). Their deployment in this historic broadcast can be seen by global audiences as an entrenchment of the type of masculinity disseminated in financially successful films such as *The Man from Snowy River*, *Red Dog*, *Gallipoli* and *Crocodile Dundee*. Collectively, these screen texts have ensured that in the imagination of the public, Australian identity remains synonymous with a certain type of stereotypical masculinity and a "reiteration of stereotypes means that a national character is circumscribed in social, moral and political terms" (Rayner 95). Supporting this assertion is Jackie Hogan's 2010 analysis of Luhrmann's *Australia*, where she claims that Hugh Jackman's embodiment of The Drover will endure as the definitive icon of "fetishised white Australian masculinity" (67). He is rugged, strong, tall, capable, handsome, commanding, gruff, physical and the epitome of "robust muscularity" (O'Brien 68) that is unaffectedly Australian, as noted by his speech, gesturality, accent and choice of language. Most significantly, The Drover is a man inseparable from the Outback where he lives and his power and expertise derives from his blue-collar identity, which in turn, is intrinsically connected to his identity.

How the body is [em]bodied on screen and how it is considered and utilised in Australian screen texts can be linked to the relational connection between hegemonic and protest masculinities. Actors' bodies, including size, height, posture, gesturality, choice of language, accent, and costume are all instructive codes of varying levels of masculinity. Increasingly, so are various other forms of nonverbal communication like proxemics whereby men use and occupy space in a territorial manner, the sparing use of haptics that are considered effeminate, kinesics, describing how men use posture, movement and swagger as well as vocalics such as pitch and volume. Again, all such facets of performing

a celebrated form of masculinity in the regional context of Australia resonate with a working-class ethos. But all these signs of reading a body, which are routinely attributed to an enforced heterosexuality in Australian culture and society, can be deciphered erroneously when taken out of a socio-cultural context.

Through his physiognomy and employment of these nonverbal communication forms, Russell Crowe portraying Jeff Mitchell in *The Sum of Us*, can be considered an idealised embodiment of Australian unaffected masculinity. In this case though, he is also a well-adjusted homosexual man. It is precisely this 'normative' status of Mitchell that so shocks Joyce, his father's new paramour, when she realises Mitchell is gay. The positive depiction of Mitchell, who is accepted, nurtured and supported by his working-class father, played with ease, charm and virility by Jack Thompson, demonstrates that hegemonic masculinity is indeed a relational concept and can only be enacted in the company of other men.

Fig. 24. Russell Crowe as the gay plumber searching for love in *The Sum of Us*.

The male body that is associated with working-class masculinity must be disciplined intensely, either through manual labour or a punishing exercise regime, and used as a weapon against

other men in the battle for hegemonic supremacy as shown through the intertexts of *The Club*. The adaptation of David Williamson's highly successful play *The Club* into the Bruce Beresford film of the same name corroborates Connell's observation that prowess in the sporting arena through the display of agile bodies in motion "serves as symbolic proof of men's superiority and right to rule" (54). Despite the idealisation of the football-honed bodies in the film, Beresford's text suggests that hegemonic masculinity can only be achieved through the alignment of several facets such as capitalist endeavours, cultural mores and the active contestation for power within the homosocial zone. Tellingly, in the film's first long scene where players and coach are seen running through the suburban streets of Melbourne, Thompson is, despite his age, as physically fit and powerful as his players. Ben Goldsmith suggests that Laurie Holden, "the plain-speaking, decent, one-club man, personifies a type of football traditionalism, which values loyalty, honesty and hard work" (105). Contrastingly, Geoff Hayward, played by John Howard in the film, is the new recruit for the club but his presence there is bitterly resented by the other players and Holden. Hayward is an idealised character physically due to his prowess, agility, musculature, and strength and this alone would entitle him to enjoy the patriarchal and financial dividend that is entailed in his contract with Collingwood. His attitude to the game, however, is one of disdain and defiance. Hayward professes, "I'm sick to death of football and I couldn't care less if I never played another game in my life. It's all a lot of macho-competitive bullshit" (39).

Such a disavowal brings into focus the function of hegemonic masculinities for the audience. Notably the idealised physiques on display in *The Club* and, likewise, in *Sunday Too Far Away* and *Red Dog*, are identifiable as working-class bodies, derivative of hard physical exertion and conjoined with the mythical cultural depiction of the battler. More

recent representations of idealised physiques in Australian screen adaptations, however, challenge the nexus between hard idealised bodies and blue-collar endeavours. Male bodies in adaptations released in the 21st century as displayed in *Ruben Guthrie* and *The Slap* (see Fig. 25) are no longer the offshoot of working manually but more associated with the privileged middle-classes and their ample resources, including leisure time to go to the gym.

The most recent adaptation of *The Shiralee* in 1987 presents another representation of archetypal Australian masculinity. According to critic and film curator Paul Byrnes "Macauley embodies much that other cultures admire about us, and which we have tended to admire about ourselves" (*Australian Screen*). Macauley's physicality, virility and

Fig. 25. Jonathan LaPaglia, aged 40 in a scene from *The Slap* (2011) portraying the forty-year-old character of Hector.

musculature assume a central role in both the novel and its two adaptations. In the novel, the protagonist is described as a physically imposing figure:

> he was a man of thirty-five, built like a cenotaph, squat and solid. He had ridges on his forehead like a row of sleepers, a brassy look, and a wide hat that put evening on his face while the rest of him was in sunshine. His hands were huge (Niland 2).

Macauley's strong physicality is translated into a striking physiognomy, made possible through casting. Bryan Brown successfully conveys Macauley's masculinity and attractiveness through his distinct physiognomy and gesturality.

The idealised male body through its alignment with discipline and reason is inseparable from hegemonic masculinities. Men who feel they have no way of contesting such a masculine state, often assume a destructive, toxic hyper-masculinity "that takes the body and its physical powers as its sources" (Gage 299). The emphasis on muscularity and violence are two of the ways in which men, locked out of the privileges that are aligned with hegemonic masculinities, use to defy their marginalised status and pursue the dividend that they see as their natural right. In the screen texts examined, the realm of protest masculinity is often depicted not only through mise-en-scène but through a deliberate emphasis on appurtenances.

What is communicated in both *The Boys* and *Animal Kingdom* intertexts is how men caught in the cycle of protest masculinities seek to exert their dominance over physical surroundings and other men through the flaunting of their athletic bodies and their use of non-verbal modes of communication. Both Pope in the latter text, and Brett Sprague in the former, maintain vigilance over their younger brothers and associates for any

outward signs of non-masculine behaviours. Such behaviours are promptly denounced as either feminine or gay, castigated and recalibrated. The functioning of men's bodies outside the 'invincible/impenetrable' norm aligns them with protest masculinities. Jamie Vlassakis, the young confused adolescent in *Snowtown*, is also shown to be a prisoner of his personal context and seems unable to enact an acceptable form of masculinity. He is the victim of incest and rape by his half-brother Troy and further sexual abuse by his mother's boyfriend, Jeffrey. More disturbingly, Vlassakis is unable to protect his younger siblings from a similar fate before the serial-killer Bunting intervenes and assumes the surrogate father role, exhibiting an uncompromising dominant form of masculinity. Vlassakis, fails to recognise this as psychotic and toxic, and instead, tries to emulate him.

Not surprisingly, the penis and its control is a pivotal consideration in the relational interplay between hegemonic and protest masculinities because, as suggested by David Buchbinder, "the penis is a central symbol in the patriarchal order and especially in the economy of masculine power" (*Studying Men* 131). Sprauge's inability to escape protest masculinities stems from his impotence, demonstrated in the laundry scene in *The Boys* when he fails to get an erection. Also ensnared in the realm of protest masculinity is the protagonist of the *Praise* intertexts, who by his own admission, is "a beaten man at twenty-three" (McGahan 37). Gordon Buchannan is young, single, unemployed, an asthmatic smoker and occasional stutterer. He bitterly reflects, "society was not constructed for the likes of me" (McGahan 26) before deciding that his feelings of alienation stem from his inability to enact a convincing form of masculinity:

> Why wasn't I a man? Why was I worrying about sincerity? Why couldn't I throw her down on the bed and be brutal? My body was the problem. My prick had no

> guts… It was too small, that was the problem… You needed something big to wave around (McGahan 19).

When Cynthia tells Gordon that she finds his penis cute, he retorts "I don't want cute. I

Fig. 26. The contrast in masculinity is illustrated in this figure by the two texts. Above, Gordon Buchanan in *Praise* encapsulates an undesirable enactment of masculinity associated with city living (6:54). Below, Jack Thompson as the venerated bush legend Clancy of the Overflow in *The Man from Snowy River*; a portrayal of idealised Australian masculinity.

want something huge and purple and bulging" (16:23). Both *Praise* intertexts outline Buchanan's protest journey of masculinity as he descends into despair and hopelessness, unable to cope with the expectations of others, particularly those of his sexually-voracious partner Cynthia. The archetypal athletic physiognomy of the strong Australian athletic male lead as well as his laconic demeanour endlessly personified by a host of Australian actors such as Bryan Brown, Jack Thompson, and Hugh Jackman is noticeably absent from Gordon's incantation of masculinity, reiterated by the intentional and prolific repetition of his "I'm sorry" (12:23) lament.

As shown by an ageing Jack Thompson, both in *Australia* and *Ruben Guthrie*, a corpulent male can still dominate his surroundings but it is "through mass rather than through a subtle and alluring play of clearly defined lines, planes and volumes" (Buchbinder 125). Thompson's undisciplined body in both these films can be described as a "grotesque body [that] can serve as a warning to society as a whole" (Morgan D. 83). Accordingly, in *Ruben Guthrie*, the rotund ageing character of Peter Guthrie is used as a condemnation of his relationship with alcohol and sexual inadequacy. In *Australia*, the corpulent character of Kipling Flynn whose surname is used as cinematic homage to Australia's first Hollywood superstar, Errol, is used as a cautionary tale. Thompson's dilapidated and pudgy body is initially aligned with the corrupt accounting practices perpetuated by the film's antagonist, Fletcher, in contrast to the fierce independence and virility of The Drover. But as the film, steeped in reconciliation politics progresses, Flynn assumes a "fatherly interest in Nullah, giving him a harmonica and teaching him to play "Over the Rainbow", thus marking his movement towards pastoral care" (Morton 167). Despite the transference of his allegiances, Flynn is still punished by the society of men for having failed to embody a more disciplined veneer of masculinity which results in his death

during a cattle stampede. Flynn's demise may be attributable to his less than ideal physiognomy where corpulence and softness is often aligned to a more feminized body.

Protest Masculinities, Class and economic status

As proposed earlier in this thesis, different types of masculinities evolve and they constantly reconfigure themselves in a relational socio-economic and cultural context at the level of a local, communal, and global community. The examination of toxic masculinities in this chapter affords the opportunity to approach the issue of class and the accompanying subset of economic prowess. Class is often considered an anathema in an Australian society determined to uphold the values of egalitarianism and a fair go. A significant number of adaptations, particularly the ones that are set in the distant past, communicate a traditional depiction of masculinity that is centred on a man's ability to work diligently in a blue-collar occupation, most frequently on the land. Despite the impulse for independence and defiance against institutions as shown by such individuals, the trajectory of such men is nearly always directed towards upholding family values.

George Baines in the *Careful, He Might Hear You* intertexts is a working-class man who cannot contest the patriarchal dividend due to the socio-historical context and his personal set of circumstances. Baines is the only male role model available to PS and is presented as the archetypal battler figure as he struggles to support his wife Lila in her attempt to gain custody of their young and impressionable nephew when ostentatious Aunt Vanessa Scott returns from England to claim custody of the young boy. Baines is, as McFarlane proposes an "enshrinement of the 'Aussie battler' image" (*Australian Cinema*, 176). Baines, dismissed from his union position because of the downturn the Great Depression brought in the 1930s, is forced to seek employment as a night

watchman in a local factory. Baines's resilience, sacrifice, and struggle is captured in the film when he is seen reading a newspaper in near-darkness to save money on the energy bill. In this way, the film reiterates the working-class values of Schultz's original source as nurturing and positive in contrast to the values espoused by Scott's rabid Anglophilic disposition. The profusion of images of delicate birds imprisoned in gilded cages becomes an illustrative motif of Scott's misguided attempt to become PS's sole custodian by effectively imprisoning him from the working-class life he has come to know and value. This extended visual metaphor is important in revealing aspects of the film's class and gender ideology since the adaptation effortlessly aligns a working-class Australian identity, such as that embodied by Baines, with normative masculinity.

A more confronting, and toxic, version of masculinity can be observed in texts that deal with disenfranchised working-class men living on the periphery of suburbia. The oppressiveness of outer-suburban wastelands depicted in both *Snowtown* and *The Boys* suggests that working-class men can no longer find meaning in their lives through traditional means of employment. They perceive themselves as redundant as suggested by film director David Caesar who claims that in the past such men "always had space for their heroism…whether it was driving, the bush or their labour to support their family" (Butterss 42). Whereas in the past male energy could be directed towards something positive and constructive, now it is merely toxic, [mis]directed in criminality or a protest against the forces that these subjugated men perceive as oppressing them.

A more extreme form of toxic masculinity can be glimpsed in the *Animal Kingdom*, *Snowtown*, and *The Boys* intertexts where the [mis]directed male energy is aligned with psychopathy and criminality. In *Animal Kingdom,* the Cody brothers view lawlessness as their natural entitlement as a rebelliousness against an institutional system, including the

police, which they consider unfair and unjust. Barry Brown, played by Joel Edgerton, comprehends the futility of his status as a career criminal, particularly its impact on his young family, and takes his first tentative steps towards redemption by betting on the stock market as an alternative source of employment. Through the design elements of the film, particularly the locales and interiors used, the audience associates the protest masculinity enacted by these men within a working-class milieu.

The nexus between toxic masculinity and criminality is also highlighted in the adaptation of *The Boys* through the plight of the fictionalised Sprague brothers prior to the commitment of their heinous crime that was pronounced by the sentencing judge Justice Alan Maxwell as "one of the most horrifying physical and sexual assaults and a calculated

Fig. 27. A screenshot from *The Boys* (16:11). Brett's girlfriend Michelle, played by Toni Collette, holding a knife against Brett on the first day of his release from prison. Whilst preparing lunch, his mother is also seen yielding a knife. In his mind, Brett is battling the fear of castration.

killing done in cold blood" [58]. In the film, two of the Sprague brothers are unemployed and the third loses his menial job as soon as Brett, the oldest brother, is released from prison and insidiously assumes, through intimidation, belittlement, and coercion the mantle of the family patriarch. Without pardoning the behaviour and the extreme form of protest masculinity enacted by the men, the dissonant music used in the film's soundtrack, particularly the menacing repetitive four-note motif, creates an eerie, suffocating atmosphere that conveys the isolation that dominates this household. The way Sprague understands himself as a man is a result of his cultural experiences, both in prison and as part of his upbringing in an isolated, oppressive, and underprivileged Sydney outer-western suburb. It could be argued that Sprague is coerced to act in a manner deemed appropriate for a disenfranchised man of his background in order to be coded as a male and because he has no access to any other form of power and economic prosperity that he sees as his patriarchal entitlement. *The Boys* illustrates the nexus between working-class unemployment and the propensity for violence, as observed by Connell, through an inability to access any form of patriarchal power (xx). The defiant masculinity assumed by Sprague is a sign of his resentment regarding his socio-economic predicament, his feelings of powerlessness and the perceived threat posed by women, such as Jackie, who in his limited world-view, enjoys more power than he does.

Protest masculinities, power and control

As argued earlier the enactment of masculinities is not a static phenomenon but a form of recalibration in a relational socio-economic and cultural context. As part of this organic modification of gender performance, some men find themselves isolated,

[58] The film is an adaptation of the Gordon Graham play of the same name that has been, in turn, adapted from events involving the brutal rape and murder of a 26-year-old nurse and beauty contestant Anita Cobby in Blacktown. The brutality of the case caused a furore in Australian society and the men responsible, including three brothers, are currently serving a life sentence without the possibility of parole.

marginalised, and without the benefits that are normally part of patriarchal privilege. Accordingly, the realm of protest masculinity can be regarded as compensatory for one's doubts about their peripheral position in the male hierarchy. Alfred Adler warns:

> every form of inner compulsion in normal and neurotic individuals may be derived from this attempt at the masculine protest. Where it succeeds, it naturally strengthens the masculine tendencies enormously, posits for itself the highest and often unattainable goals, develops a craving for satisfaction and triumph, intensifies all abilities and egotistical drives, increases envy, avarice and ambition, and brings about an inner restlessness which makes any external compulsion, lack of satisfaction, disparagement, and injury unbearable. Defiance, vengeance, and resentment are its steady accompaniments (48).

Protest masculinity can be distinguishable from hegemonic masculinities by the distortion of masculine traits that are considered positive, as well as the exclusion of other characteristics such as a nurturing nature is routinely aligned with femininity. It is this perplexing mixture of impulses which identifies protest masculinities as oppressive and destructive (Kauffman 3). Any figure or institution that stands in the way of a male protest becomes another target to be attacked and dismantled. In *Animal Kingdom*, in the Cody family, power is exercised pitilessly and oppressively as competing forces trying to maintain and impose control. One such instance is a scene in which the eldest Cody sibling, Pope, harangues his younger brother Darren by belligerently asking him five times if he is gay (29:28). Pope is feeling that his stranglehold over the Cody family is dissipating and his harassment of his younger brother is designed to ensure that the latter agrees to join in the action to avenge the death of Baz and to continue his participation in the Cody family business – crime.

Fig. 28. A screenshot from *Animal Kingdom*. The leader of the Cody clan, Pope, played by Ben Mendelson, belittles his brother through homophobia as a way of exerting influence over the younger man. (29:28)

The removal or elimination of any individual or institution that stands in the way of exercising power is also evident in the *Bliss* intertexts although ironically Harry Joy achieves this as a way of escaping from the stifling bonds of hegemonic masculinities as he embraces a more marginalised embodiment of masculinity in the bush which results in his freedom. Joy's eventual acceptance of his 'true' masculine identity can only take place after he dispenses with the antiquated and oppressive masculine traits that he had previously embraced. Both in the novel and in its adaptation, Joy learns to reject aspects of a conservative male identity, such as eschewing violence, despite being the victim of it at the hands of the police. He also rejects oppressing others despite suffering from various forms of institutionalised oppressiveness, including his marriage, his business, and his period of incarceration at the hands of Alice Dalton and her institution. Don Fletcher observes that Harry's committal to the mental hospital is "a reversal of the control traditionally exercised over women by fathers and brothers or by fathers over

children" (39). In this way, protest masculinities are, once again, aligned with femininity and passivity.

Another aspect of toxic masculinity associated with power and control involves the hyper-masculinity that men assume in their relations with others. This can be observed in *Snowtown* where power is exercised through the hyper vigilance and psychopathic acts of John Bunting. Throughout *Snowtown,* Bunting ensures that Jamie Vlassakis's journey towards an authorised form of masculinity must transcend the threat of homosexuality. This confronting film directed by Justin Kurzel examines how serial killer Bunting convinced young Vlassakis to participate in the murders of eleven individuals in the economically-disadvantaged suburbs of Adelaide. The film owes much of its verisimilitude to the use of local non-professional actors whose raw acting style, combined with the clever cinematography of Arkapaw, imbues Kurzel's text with the feel of a documentary. Many commentators have expressed their confusion about the intricate and perplexing set of relationships portrayed in the film whereas in Marshall's nonfictional text, these are scrupulously explained to the reader. Arguably, this confusion in the relationships between the various characters in the film is intentional because the director has chosen to present the patterns of relationships in the way that he imagined young Vlassakis might understand them, and thus, in turn, provide an insight into the perplexing world of toxic masculinity.

Messerschmidt asserts that dominating masculinities involve commanding and controlling specific interactions over people and events (72) even though, for men entrapped in the web of protest masculinity, this control and power can be only illusory. In *The Boys*, Sprague imposes power and dominance over his brothers and mother through intimidation, harassment, and oppression. Unlike the play, the film presents two

of the girlfriends of the Sprague brothers as independent and assertive. Michelle, played by Toni Collette, is disappointed when Brett fails to measure up in their sexual encounter in the laundry. Similarly, Jackie, Glenn's girlfriend, is the only character in full-time employment and the owner of a car which functions as a metonym for her economic independence. She constitutes a threat to Sprague's masculinity and authority, and accordingly he proceeds to strategically isolate her from his brother. The only thing that can account for the narrative's tragic dénouement, as Luke Buckmaster suggests, is "the gradual seething discontent apparent in the lives of the perpetrators" (par. 9).

A final aspect of control and power is the way power and space are intertwined because the latter, according to O'Brien, is "a commodity associated with male power" (70). It is precisely this nexus between power and physical space that distinguishes hegemonic and toxic masculinities. In the case of the former, dominant men enjoying the status of hegemonic masculinity are comfortable, even dominating their physical space as seen by Mick Dundee and The Drover in *Crocodile Dundee* and *Australia* respectively. Contrastingly, the men who try to control their physical environment without success will remain enshrined within toxic masculines. This can be exemplified by the adaptation of *Snowtown*, where the naïve protagonist Vlassakis is constrained by the physical spaces he inhabits and the viewer realises that he is not safe in any of these. The entrapment, which can be contextualised with his low socio-economic status, is reinforced by the discordant music provided by Jed Kurzel.

Absent patriarchs and the ghost of the nuclear family

The anthropologist Margaret Mead was the first academic to question the assumed connection between biology and gender, showing instead that gender enactments are

socially and culturally constructed (Lindsey 29). Her work, examining how different cultures approach work and chores, explicated that gender is not a fixed position but is fluid and interdependent with a variety of other factors. Eighty years after the publication of Mead's work, gender enactment is understood as a configuration of inter-reliant practices "embedded in specific social structures and institutional arrangements" such as families (Pascoe and Bridges 124). One such perennial social structure and instructional arrangement in screen texts is the representation of family and the role it plays in the intersection between hegemonic and protest masculinity.

The importance of family as an institution has grown significantly since the Industrial Age alongside the incremental rise of the capitalist system. As the 2015 adaptation of Kate Grenville's novel *The Secret River* demonstrates, the nexus between family and capitalist success is symbiotic in contemporary thinking; the way it treats its subject matter is an accretion of modern paradigms such as postcolonialism, feminism, and a questioning of the dynamics and machinations of power. The success and prosperity of the Thornhill family at the conclusion of the narrative, through overcoming seemingly insurmountable odds, is a tangible way of viewing the patriarchal dividend as the most focal point of power in contemporary society and something worth contesting. The transformation of the institution of the nuclear family at the centre of all capitalist endeavours contains significant ramifications as to how men, deprived of the nuclear family, or the ones existing within a dysfunctional family model, understand and enact their own version of masculinity.

Traditionally, a male patriarch whose authority was unchallenged regulated families. Lynne Segal quotes Simone de Beauvoir in claiming that it was through such a figure "that the family communicates with the rest of the world: he incarnates that immense,

difficult and marvellous world of adventure; he personifies transcendence, he is God" (27). Steven L. Nock in his book *Marriage in Men's Lives* (1998) outlines the expectations of men to be responsible parents, breadwinners, and defenders of their women. Nock notes that in carrying out these duties men may "become aggressive, assertive, competitive, hierarchical" (17). The intersection between the nuclear family, heterosexuality, and the subservience of women is demonstrated in the adaptation of *The Harp in the South,* where despite the many ills that befall the women at the hands of blundering men and despotic institutions, such as the Catholic Church, the women never challenge patriarchal control. *The Harp in the South* intertexts present family life with an inept man at its helm as an idealised condition. Stoic, fatalistic, and proud of his status as an underdog and working-class man, Hughie Darcy squanders money on alcohol and his mates even when the opportunity presents itself to improve his family's financial conditions, albeit briefly. Hughie is physically exhausted from manual labour, is routinely inebriated, and in effect, a poor provider for his family. He displays a defeatist attitude but dreams of winning the lottery and gaining recognition from other men by aspiring to be an army captain, wearing a red and gold uniform.

The nuclear family is treated satirically in another three notable Australian screen adaptations suggesting that hegemonic masculinity should not be an idealised goal for men. Firstly, the *Ruben Guthrie* intertexts suggest family dysfunctionality and alcoholism are generational occurrences in Australian families. Ruben's attempt at sobriety is perceived as wowserism by his own father who implores him "let's get pissed and catch up" (Cowell 15). This reminds audiences of the central role that alcohol plays in male bonding, particularly within the Australian cultural context. Gordon Buchanan in *Praise* rejects traditional notions of nuclear families through his disconnection with his own

family and he eschews most aspects of hegemonic masculinity such as his adamant rejection of fatherhood when Cynthia falls pregnant (Crilly 182). Finally, a satire of the nuclear family through the scrutiny of infidelity, incest, promiscuity, and drug dependency can be located at the core of the film adaptation of *Bliss*. Like Carey's novel, the film recounts one man's search for happiness that ironically only occurs after he has denounced patriarchal notions of power and identity, shown through the hallowed institution of the family.

The absence of a dominant father figure need not always be seen as negative. Clive Moore uses the term atomistic, coined by Miles Fairburn, to describe archetypal bushmen such as those encountered in *The Man from Snowy River* who devoid of nuclear familial ties, were "fairly autonomous and anonymous, lacking traditional restraints" (8). This condition is not always as positively portrayed as it is in the Paterson poem and its filmic adaptation. As enacted by Logan Marriott in the *Careful, He Might Hear You* intertexts, autonomy does not equate with freedom from responsibility but rather a delegation of duty. As part of their maturation process, boys and young men seek to emulate the masculine performance of men whom they perceive as powerful and privileged; men whom other men consider to be 'idealised men' and who can provide them with economic prosperity in the future. In the *Careful, He Might Hear You* intertexts, the young protagonist, indulgently named PS by his mother, is nurtured by his uncle George Baines. PS later forms a fleeting bond with his über-masculine biological father Marriott when he briefly visits him as part of a custody dispute. For PS, and his psycho-cognitive journey, the influences of these older men do not counteract the threat of castration signified by his culture-vulture aunt, Vanessa Scott. The laconic and witty Marriott is emotionally affected by meeting his son who so startlingly resembles his anti-

authoritarian and bohemian wife, who died tragically. Through his short time with him, Marriott frees the boy from his realm of passivity, urging him to assume an air of rebellion and assertiveness. This is reinforced by Ray Cook's orchestral score as well as by an extreme close-up showing the father and son, symbolically joining hands in a bloke's deal against the strictures imposed by Scott's stifling socialising of the young boy. Paul Byrnes intimates, "Logan is the rude intrusion of a masculine force in his development. Even though he's no good, he does some good for the boy" (Curator's Notes, Clip 3 par. 4). Following the climactic scene with his father, PS embarks on a journey of non-cooperation with Scott, particularly after she is successful in gaining court-authorised custody of him, which results in his ultimate liberation. When Scott informs him that she is giving him up in the penultimate scene in the film, shortly before she tragically drowns in a ferry accident, PS holds the rock of fake gold that Marriott has fossicked and given to him as a gift, reminding the audience that his impending success is a direct result of the male compact made with his father.[59]

The breakdown of the nuclear family, and particularly the absence of a traditional father, is considered a crucial factor in the performance of protest masculinities as seen in a number of key screen Australian adaptations. This is done without pardoning the actions of men like Pope Cody in *Animal Kingdom*, John Bunting in *Snowtown,* and Brett Sprague in *The Boys* as anything but inherently psychotic and evil. In *The Boys* intertexts, Sprague fills the vacuum left by an absent patriarch in an oppressive domestic milieu. Felicity Holland and Jane O'Sullivan identify this facet as claustrophobic and comment that it is realised through cinematography, "often shot through doorways and composed of long, low-focused shots" which highlights "the domestic causes of the rage these immature

[59] Ferries were considered the domain of the working-class in the 1930s in Sydney. This is the first time Vanessa foregoes the convenience of her chauffeured limousine and catches a ferry.

Fig. 29. A screenshot from *Animal Kingdom*. 'Baz', played by Joel Edgerton assumes the role of mentor for J when the latter joins the Cody clan. The scene illustrates that the enactment of masculinity invariably takes place in the company of other men and is authorised by them. (13:19)

men feel" (83). Elsewhere in the film, the juxtaposition between the world of interiors and exteriors is used to denote Brett's location within protest masculinity. Institutions Sprague views as oppressive, such as the police, symbolise the macrocosm of the outside world for him. Sprague, literally, is ensnared within the domestic milieu, and it is within this realm that he enacts his audacious but tyrannical defiance.

In *Animal Kingdom*, another psychotic man, Andrew 'Pope' Cody, the eldest son, assumes control of the family but he is ruled by his Oedipal mother, Smurf. Jack Sargeant claims that all Cody family members remain isolated in society through their stubborn defiance, "none of them willing or able to see beyond the confines of the family: bloodlines and crime are all they understand" (10). [60] In the scene set in a Vietnamese restaurant, Smurf reveals that the family abides by a code of practice which relies on the inviolability of one's 'word'. She chides her son Craig, "Don't argue the rules" (Michôd 16). J/Joshua

[60] The naming of the elder brother as Pope is possibly a sly homage to the type of Catholic family one encounters in *The Godfather* trilogy and the infamous crime families of Melbourne.

played by James Frecheville is the introspective protagonist undertaking a process of self-maturation in the Michôd film. The text invites the audience to see him as a vulnerable young man who is on the road to adult maturity, and not as the youngest member of a notorious crime family. Brown, played by Joel Edgerton, is portrayed as an adult male role model for Joshua as seen in his guidance of Joshua's personal toilet hygiene. "You had your hand on your cock. Your hands go anywhere near your arse or your cock, you wash 'em after." (Michôd 17). Pope, too, assumes the role of a mentor for J, even though the viewer realises he is ill-qualified for this, "If you ever need to talk about anyone or anything, I'm here" (Michôd 49). The authorial mouthpiece of the text, the representative of hegemonic masculinity, Sergeant Nathan Leckie played by Guy Pearce, attempts to induct the hapless young man into being a more nurturing and inclusive male when he guides him through a cooking segment that demonstrates genuine concern for the younger man. In doing so, Sergeant Leckie attempts to initiate the young man into a life of social and lawful normalcy.

Protest masculinities, violence and criminality

Hypermasculinity, an exaggerated enactment of masculinity, emanating from the country's colonial beginnings has been a perennial presence in Australian culture and literature and was given prominence during the opening of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games as I have explained earlier. Such an embellished enactment of masculinity can be seen both positively and negatively. Whilst in many respects the titular man from Paterson's poem can be viewed as a contestant for hegemonic masculinity due to his heroic prowess and defiance of nature, his status as an itinerant worker and his lack of economic capital would better align him with the marginalised status of protest masculinities. The poem details the adventure of the eponymous character who, in

keeping with a frontier-based hyper masculinity, is a man of action, not of words. Through his expertise, the poem's protagonist manages to rescue a racing colt from joining a herd of brumbies and in the process, according to Peter Kirkpatrick, "becomes an agent of the land itself: less a human character than a rough-riding metonymy" (Pierce 200). At the end of the poem, Paterson informs us "the man from Snowy River is a household word today and the stockmen tell the story of his ride" without providing details of any attendant socio-economic advancement.

The film of *Puberty Blues* shows that physical violence is a means available to men who wish to defy their own marginalised status in society and contest a more advantageous aspect of masculinity. The potential for violence exists within the ranks of protest masculinity but also through the interactions of men who are thought to enjoy a more hegemonic status. This is demonstrated in a scene, which is not in the hypotext, showing the contretemps involving the older male lifesavers who show no compunction in enforcing Council rules about surfing between the flags as shown in Fig. 30. This is an

Fig. 30 – a screenshot from *Puberty Blues* (45:54) showing the relational nature of masculinities as enacted by two different groups of Australian men.

apt reminder to the viewer that the performative masculinity of the surfie boys is enacted within a hierarchical patriarchal arena. During this melee, one of the younger gang members tries to insult the lifesavers by yelling "poofta" (46:27), subtly reminding the audience that homosexuality is considered a betrayal of the masculine code of behaviour. The most contemptible example of violence and misogyny associated with protest masculinity involves the maltreatment and rape of women. One of the authors of the novel, Kathy Lette, was damning in her reaction to the film:

> the film sanitised the plot by omitting central references to miscarriage and abortion. The movie depicts a culture in which gang rape is incidental, mindless violence is amusing and hard drug use is fatal, but it was unable to address the consequences of the brutal sexual economy in which the girls must exist (Gleeson par. 3).

This is illustrated in the film adaptation through the character of Frieda Cummins, a young woman on the periphery of this community, routinely called a "moll" by all characters, both male and female. When she is offered a lift in the panel-van by three of the surfie gang members, the dark lighting, mise-en-scène, the smirk of derision on the face of the young men, as well as Frieda's positioning as the object of the male gaze, act as a prolepsis to the abuse that will follow[61]. To avoid the accusation of rape, the men orchestrate a kerfuffle that convinces Frieda to offer herself, "I'll screw the lot of yews" (sic) (42:41), in a futile attempt to be liked and accepted by the gang. The rape is enacted as a performative hierarchical act between the men, as the driver of the panel van informs his mates, "I'm first, you're second, you're slops" (42: 55). The decision to accompany this confronting scene musically with a single male whistling a reprisal of the film's title

[61] The two female protagonists in the 2012 television adaptation of *Puberty Blues* avert the rape of Frieda.

theme "Puberty Blues" by Neil Finn, reminds the audience that the subculture presented in the text is dominated and controlled by men; is in fact a "boysworld" as Fig. 31 illustrates.

Violence, particularly directed at women, is seen as a way of protesting against the political and economic gains acceded to women since the 1970s. In *The Boys,* Sprague justifies violence against women as a way of defying the infinitesimal economic and cultural progress made by women such as his mother. Through bullying, intimidation, and violence Sprague upholds his grip on a dominant form of masculinity that is centred on aggression. In Graham's play, when Glenn, unable to appreciate the futility of his protest masculinity, states that he feels like "punchin [women's] lights out (68), his brother Sprague adds:

> I reckon that's about all you can do, if you want to come out of it with any self-respect. I mean, there's a way a man deserves to feel, isn't there, by rights, like a

Fig. 31. After her rape, Frieda is abandoned outside this clothing shop as the camera, ironically, zooms in on the word 'boysworld' (44: 40).

> soldier in a battle, he's fought and won? A bloody warrior in the olden days, conquering! A hero! (69).

Sprague, as played by David Wenham, is the definitive embodiment of toxic masculinity. He is an arrogant, misogynistic, and violent young man whose recent release from gaol is the catalyst for the action in both play and film. He has limited, if any, resources which would allow him to live comfortably even in the western suburbs of Sydney, and no prospects of gaining employment. Sprague rules uncontested over his gormless and self-destructive younger brothers and reduces his working-class mother to a figure of pathos. He even refers to himself as 'the terminator' in a delusional intertextual attempt to flout his own importance. The use of 'Brit Grit' Kitchen Sink Social Realism (Stadler and Mcwilliam 201) in both stage and film presentations make the callous and loathsome values and attitudes embraced by the toxic Sprague brothers even more confronting for the audience.

Depictions of virility and strength are perpetually endorsed as normative and desirable in popular Australian culture and Christine Boman proposes that "the capacity and willingness to engage in acts of violence often serves as a test of hegemonic masculinity" (128), which Sprague clearly fails. Sprague's hyper masculine display of physical violence against Michelle shortly after she accuses him of "taking it up the arse" (45:13) whilst incarcerated and her resolve to leave him, can be viewed as a defence against emasculation, as suggested by Boman (131). As exemplified by the character of Sprague, criminality is often a distinguishable trait associated with protest masculinities. Criminality, too, can be seen in the context of marginalisation and oppression that is experienced by living in the disadvantaged areas in Australia's suburbs which are routinely geographically distant and isolated from the CBD.

In *Animal Kingdom,* Craig Cody initiatives his nephew J into the world of violence when he demonstrates to him the thrill of holding and using a gun as a way of intimidating others. Craig Cody equates the power of the gun to sexual gratification when he asks his nephew, "How'd that feel? You get a stiffy?" (Michôd 13). As seen in this instance, hypervigilance is implicated in the enactment of authorised masculinity, which as a relational cultural concept, insists that men constantly need the authorised permission of other men to act in a manner that is deemed masculine and will enhance their own status. In *Animal Kingdom* this is inextricable from physical violence, as it is in the *Snowtown* intertexts.

John Bunting's need for his brand of violent masculinity to be accepted by Vlassakis is the central narrative trajectory in Kurzel's haunting debut feature, *Snowtown*. This is because violence and criminality have merged as a protest against what Bunting considers to be debased elements in his community. The motivation for Bunting's murder spree is explained in the Marshall original source material as a form of vigilantism and psychosis over the presumed failure of the State to duly punish paedophiles, homosexuals, and other marginalised characters, including disabled people who cannot fulfil their role as real men. Marshall infers and quotes from court transcripts to support, that the real-life abuse of young Bunting at the age of eight may have been the trigger in the formation of his disturbing patterns of behaviour that culminated in what the popular press referred to as the 'Bodies-in-Barrels' spate of killings.

The film is more elusive about Bunting's motivation since it is presented entirely from Vlassakis's perspective. What the audience can deduce, however, is that Bunting entertains his own marque of moral reasoning that eerily echoes that of the popular adaptation of the long-running television *Showtime* series, *Dexter* (2006-2013). Afraid of

remaining "a pussy" (29:56) and being identified with the feminine, Vlassakis robotically learns to follow the escalating demands that Bunting makes of him. Vlassakis obediently acquiesces to Bunting's bidding and this is marked symbolically through the cutting of his long hair, a metonym for femininity and 'softness', in preference for a crew-cut, favoured by prison inmates and soldiers, and long associated with a more hard-core masculinity. The "deranged psychological intimacy between two men" (Smith D. 89) can be interpreted as Bunting's attempt to have his performative normative sexuality and masculinity not only witnessed by the younger male, who by duplicating Bunting's haircut and demeanour becomes his callous simulacrum, but in addition, emulated, as a way of asserting his status as paterfamilias. The confronting nature of this form of protest masculinity that is inseparable from psychopathy and violence is rendered tangible for the audience through cinematic techniques. Jed Kurzel's experimental rock score evokes menace in every note but this is used sparingly. Much of the two-hour film is devoid of any soundtrack, which adds to the gritty realism of the film and convinces the audience that we are sharing Vlassakis's unsettling understanding of the horror unfolding before him in real time.

The Refuge of homosociality

What can be observed in the screen adaptations discussed in this chapter in reference to protest masculinities is that the act of defiance itself often occurs as a collective practice in a homosocial zone with other men. According to Peter Looker:

> men maintain power through a kind of collusion in which they deny what they can know about themselves and other men in regard to their experiences of being socialised, or gendered, as men. One of the most effective forms of disguise that

> men can therefore use is to separate their lives into discrete categories, the private and public, the individual and the collective, and not to see the way these categories intertwine and support one another in the formation of a powerful masculine gestalt (209).

Eve Sedgwick defines homosociality as a way of describing social male bonds which can be enacted in society within the context of homophobia (1). Philip Butterss acknowledges that homosociality as developed in Australian society is a contributing factor for the enactment of protest masculinities but not the sole cause of it (44). Through intimidation, violence, and psychological manipulation the dominant men in *Snowtown*, *The Boys* and *Animal Kingdom* are all able to exercise their supremacy and convince their less confident acolytes of the value of maintaining loyalty to the male pack. Very few screen adaptations, reject homosociality and those that do, do so intentionally.

The film of *The Man from Snowy River* stands alone in communicating a positive representation of homosociality, particularly how the invigilation of other older men can propel a man to defy expectations and achieve their personal best. The film celebrates Jim Craig's achievement in a world of men, using many of the tropes of the western genre. Craig lives in isolation in the company of men and it is here that he learns to value the homosocial order of this mountainous country. At the funeral of his father Henry, a group of stern-looking mountain men, inform him that "owning the place has nothing to do with it… you got to go to the low country and earn the right to live up here, just like your father did" (8:31). Incorporated in Craig's journey from lad to man is Joseph Campbell's archetypal hero's journey that sees him complete the necessary steps with the aid of several wiser older male mentors. Craig is provided with a powerful guide and

rescuer in the guise of Clancy of the Overflow who facilitates his "Crossing of the return Threshold," (Campbell 69) and in so doing, enables him to single-handedly muster the famous wild stallion, "the son of Old Regret" (stanza 1), as identified in the original poem. Through the inclusion of the Harrison brothers in the film adaptation, the director locates Craig's heroic successes within a homosocial patriarchal order that extols the achievements of a masculine individual through its association with a dominant masculine economy.

The threat to the homosocial order in *The Boys* and *Animal Kingdom* is presented through a close intimate relationship with a woman and must be eliminated even if this relationship is clearly a positive element in the lives of the young disenfranchised men. The refuge of homosociality in *The Boys* is presented as the only protection against a harsh society that disempowers men and the only way through which masculinity can be rescued. In *The Boys*, Glenn Sprague hopes to escape the humdrum existence and cycle of poverty through his relationship with Jackie, and young J in *Animal Kingdom* experiences genuine intimacy and support in his sexual relationship with Nicky. Brett, the Alpha male in the Sprague clan, ensures his younger brother denounces his relationship through a nuanced system of mental intimidation which reaches its apotheosis when he questions Glenn's masculinity, "she's got you by the balls Jesus, if you were still any sort of man you'd have backed me up" (46). Through this, he evokes the privileged position of homosociality in Australian working-class culture.

Analogous to this, Pope Cody, the invigilator of gender relations within the Cody family, callously kills Nicky via a heroin overdose because he views her as a threat to J's capitulation to his dominance. In *Animal Kingdom*, J's reticent character is revealed in the opening sequence as he tries to deal with the sudden death of his mother. The film's gaze

belongs to J as he tries to negotiate the various and opposing forces that are attempting to mould him into a certain type of man. Initially seen as a luckless, marginalised adolescent through his economic status and context, he establishes contact with his estranged malefic grandmother when his despondent mother, alienated from her own family, dies of a heroin overdose. His disenfranchisement locates J as an embodiment of marginalised masculinity but as the film progresses, and J is thrust into the Darwinian violent maelstrom suggested by the film's title, his loyalties are divided between the hegemonic masculinity, embodied by the authorised male of Sergeant Leckie, and the protest masculinity represented by the actions of his violent Cody uncles. As part of his oedipal trajectory, J is inducted in the world of men by, ironically, both his uncles and the police detective Leckie, who is, simultaneously, relentlessly attempting to persecute his uncles; demonstrating the pervasiveness of the homosocial order in all facets of society.

Snowtown explicitly investigates homosociality as the only avenue by which normative behaviour and sexuality can be realised. Sedgwick explores the complex homosocial relations between men observing that often the presence of a woman is utilised as a way of reifying the bonds between men (26). In this way, the presence of the ineffectual mother in *Snowtown* functions as a facilitator for the growing inculcation of Jamie onto the path of normative masculinity as offered by Bunting. The tragedy of the *Snowtown* intertexts, however, is that young Jamie is unable to distinguish between hegemonic and psychopathic masculinity and thus remains stunted in an ossified notion of masculinity which will fail to provide him with any hegemonic dividend.[62] *Snowtown* intimates that performative masculinity is enacted for other men who in turn, judge, validate, or contest acceptable standards of masculine behaviour. Such observation and vigilance of a man's

[62] James Vlassakis at the age of 23 was sentenced in 2002 to a 'minimum sentence' of 26 years and is presently held in isolation in an unidentified South Australian prison.

enactment of masculinity need not always be so tangible, as enacted in *Snowtown*, but it can often take place in a panoptic manner, as demonstrated in the work of Michel Foucault (202). Foucault suggests that the disciplinary architectural marvel, the panopticon, can be seen as a metaphor for the way most people behave in society as if they are constantly being watched, and potentially censured, by a higher authority. They internalise this, disciplining the self and subjecting the self to surveillance.

Enforced heterosexuality

Jeffrey Weeks observes that contemporary western notions of masculinities have concentrated on how the patriarchal discourse subordinates both femininity, as its polar 'other', and homosexuality, considered as a bellicose threat to normative homosocial order (191). This continuation of privilege for powerful and not so powerful men is "oppositionally and hierarchically defined through the compulsory practice of heterosexuality" according to Judith Butler (151). Even though the phenomenon of mateship in Australian culture, as argued in a previous chapter, threatens to disrupt the platonic equilibrium of homosociality, most screen adaptations reify the importance of heterosexuality as an integral aspect of the embodiment of Australian masculinities. Even men who do aspire to, but do not enjoy, the patriarchal dividend entailed in hegemonic masculinities, espouse a heteronormative approach in their sexual relationships. Unfailingly Australian screen adaptations uphold enforced heterosexuality as a core ingredient in the identity of Australian masculinity. They do this through asserting the importance of heterosexuality and by denouncing and demonising non-normative enactments of sexuality.

Enforced heterosexuality is seen as imperative for social stability as suggested in *Careful, He Might Hear You.* Both Vanessa Scott and her patroness, the repressed Aunt Ettie, are represented as 'unAustralian' in *Careful, He Might Hear You* because they prefer to think of England as home. The two wealthy women are also embroiled in an obsessive relationship, which the novel intimates is a lesbian one, an important aspect of Elliott's narrative that the film adaptation obfuscates. In this way, the battle for PS is carried out not only in terms of nationality but also in terms of normative masculinity, as represented by Uncle George and Logan Marriott.

Finally, a compulsory form of normative sexuality is enforced in Australian screen adaptations by demonising its binary opposite. The demonisation of homosexuality is a motif throughout *Animal Kingdom* and is vigilantly enforced through Pope's constant belligerent attitude to his brother Darren. Deviant behaviours are circumvented by the vigilante behaviour of Bunting in *Snowtown* who sees himself as a cleanser of non-normative elements in society. His targets include those whom he perceives as miscreants who do not espouse heterosexuality, which is seen as his raison d'etre. In *The Boys*, notwithstanding despite the possible rape Brett sustained whilst in jail, and perhaps the possible cause of his impotence, any form of male sexuality considered soft/feminine is vehemently decried by him. Enforced heterosexuality is at its most insidious and vile here, culminating in the film's final harrowing scene.

The exaltation or condemnation of protest masculinities

In *Exploring Masculinities: Identity, Inequality, Continuity and Change* (2016) C. J. Pascoe and Tristan Bridges defined masculinity as "the practices, behaviours, attitudes, sexualities, emotions, positions, bodies, organisations, institutions, and all manner of expectations

culturally expected and associated with being a male" (4). This definition certainly affirms the assertion in this chapter that different types of masculinities are constantly reconfiguring themselves in a relational socio-economic and cultural context at the level of local, national, and global communities.

The examination of Australian screen adaptations which unfold in the city, the bush, and the liminal spaces of this divide, disseminate many authorised and valued enactments of being a man. This is not surprising, since masculinity is socially and culturally constructed at specific junctures in time and culture and, accordingly, different prevailing socio-economic and cultural conditions can give rise to different enactments of masculinity.

Some screen texts certainly suggest that anti-social protest masculinity that is characteristically destructive, is often neutered by institutional agents such as the police, through death, or by escape to another physical realm, such as the one afforded by the bush. The State restores order in the chaos enacted in *Snowtown*, *The Boys*, and *Animal Kingdom*. In the latter, Baz tells Pope, the ineffectual leader of the Cody clan, "our game's over, mate. It's getting too hard. It's a joke" (Michôd 27) and this comment can also be applicable to the representation of an antiquated form of protest masculinity espoused by the violent Cody brothers which Harper describes as "fatigued masculine domination" (51). Ironically, the masculinity embodied by the Cody brothers is that, through the different cinematic compositional elements used by Michôd, the domestic world of the Codys becomes a sort of prison, or a lair, that both protects and curtails their freedom and opportunity. The subjective lens of the camera throughout the narrative is synonymous with J's gaze and thereby the viewer "is explicitly invited to understand the tensions and complexities of a world that submerges him" (Simmons 122). Another way that the viewer is compelled to share J's view of the bewildering world of the Codys, is

through continuous tracking sequences and by privileging him with a retroactive voice-over that is absent from Michôd's shooting script. J surmises that the masculinity embodied by his uncle Pope, particularly his belief of women are expendable, is futile and he condemns this by shooting him at the conclusion of the film.

In many screen adaptations examined, the city, most routinely Sydney, is personified as a castrating force that limits the contestation of potent enactments of masculinity and deprives men of the patriarchal dividend. Indeed, the notion of a city personified as a woman, as a corrupting influence and a temptress, is not new or unique, but can be traced to the Hebrew scriptures according to Segovia and Tolbert (283) and can be verified by an examination of the intertexts of *Ruben Guthrie*, and *Careful He Might Hear You*.[63]

Ruben Guthrie, before the commencement of the narrative, could be considered as an embodiment of hegemonic masculinity, but it is evident, this has not served him well. Through him the adaptation intertexts constitute a subtle, but definite, challenge to a traditional cultural archetype that relies on alcohol for an ebullient performance of Australian masculinity. A great deal of Guthrie's anger and frustration is directed not at himself, nor his addiction, but towards the women in his life, including Zoya, Megan, and his mother. Guthrie's employer, Ray, represents the worst excesses of capitalist exploitation when he tries to intimidate the younger man to continue his alcohol and drug dependency which he considers vital in Guthrie's work performance.[64] Ray uses pugilistic language in doing so, "you just keep in your corner boy or I will come down on you so hard you won't know what fucken hit you, alright?" (Cowell 13).

[63] best illustrated by the *Emerald City* intertexts.
[64] No surname is provided for this character in the play or its film adaptation.

The city as a castrating, debilitating force is also communicated in *Careful, He Might Hear You*. Late in the narrative, the embodiment of working-class ethos, Baines, punches Marriott before the latter resumes his life of irresponsibility and larrikinism on his way to the Northern Territory. The inebriated Marriott, exclaims bewilderingly, "Why did you do that for?" (1:08:42) but the audience can assume that the blow is symbolic of Marriott's betrayal of masculinist values. The conclusion of the film, played over the closing credits, sees Bill Marriott running joyously through the world of nature illuminated by the unmistakable Australian light, having rejected the ways of the old colonial world embodied both by Vanessa and 'benevolent' Cousin Ettie. As Bill, who has rejected his former name of PS, partly because it was associated with the feminine realm of his mother, embarks on his journey to maturity, his espousal of the active world of men, as embodied by the father-figure of Baines and his actual biological father, Logan, is an apt reminder that the masculine realm and an Australian national identity are intrinsically linked.

Finally, two figures who gain the most through a defiance against their circumstances are the marginalised orphaned young man in *The Man from Snowy River* and his polar opposite, Harry Joy in *Bliss*, who foregoes the economic privilege associated with the city and finds salvation as an ostracised character in the bush. In the case of the former, the enactment of masculinity as heroic is ameliorated by Craig's union with Jessica and the imposition of order over land/nature. The Paterson debt is exploited consciously in the film adaptation to bestow a cultural gravitas to a tale of a young man's self-actualisation that becomes an iconic hypermasculinity. This is highlighted by Paterson's evocation during the Sydney Olympics Opening Ceremony and by the fact that he is featured on the Australian ten-dollar note. The variation of Australia's most favourite song (*Waltzing*

Matilda) at the end of the film, by composer Bruce Rowland, affirms the status of the young man as a national embodiment of masculinity and valour. At the close of the film, the protagonist not only gains the respect of all other men but he also gains access to the considerable wealth of the Harrisons, thus ensuring his material and economic survival as well as completing his oedipal journey through his coupling with Jessica, her long hair acting as a metonym for her fertility.

Contrastingly, in *Bliss*, altruistic hegemonic masculinity is shown not to serve Harry Joy well. He abandons his privileged masculinity and assumes a more relegated persona which is aligned with protest masculinities. It is only after Joy sheds all remnants of his old self, including the 'white suit' he routinely wears throughout the film as a metonym of his business success, that he begins to relish the protection afforded to him by the forest canopy. In embracing the bush as a binary of the cultivated and suffocating world of suburbia, suggested in the Lawrence film through dark lighting, minimal, austere sets and the absence of ameliorating non-diegetic music, Joy becomes associated with indigeneity and becomes one with the landscape, since in the manner of his death he embraces the land and becomes synonymous with it. The shedding of Joy's former identity becomes complete, demonstrated by the giant holes he digs, ostensibly to facilitate the swift growth of trees, but also signalling an unconscious act of burying his former self.

*

In closing, this chapter has argued that defiant masculinity can only be seen within the prism of different relations and it involves an exaggerated utilisation of hegemonic masculinity by marginalised or disempowered people in society who lack socio-economic

power and status. The utilisation of physical power by men over others they view as less worthy, or even the very notion of the potential of violence, reminds audiences of the necessity of scrutinising different tiers of masculinities as inseparable from the nexus between gender and power. Whilst respective Australian screen adaptations either endorse or condemn the enactment of defiant masculinities, when viewed collectively, they constitute a "fantasy of conduct and behaviour which can never be realised in practice because constantly men will be defeated by their actual humanity and mix of feminine and masculine capacities" (Edley and Wetherall 53).

Chapter 6

Subordinated masculinities and homosexuality.

This chapter will explore the subordination of gay men within a hegemonic framework, which Raewyn Connell identifies as the most resounding example of cultural dominance (*Masculinities* 78). The representation of gay men in Australian screen adaptations between 1975 and 2015 reflects social norms of this period and as such their subordination is enacted because they fail to measure up to the norm of Australian identity that is grounded on 'white' male heteronormativity on account of their sexual orientation. The subordination of gay men is also realised because gay men either eschew, or are spurned from, the normative working-class masculinity that occupies such a unifying position within the Australian national psyche, as suggested by Kirsty Whitman (52). Even though the term 'gay' is highly contested and it is difficult to define conclusively, it is used in this chapter as an umbrella term for men who identify as gay, homosexual, transgender or queer; or who are recognisable as such by audiences.

This chapter examines how the representation of gay men has been communicated in screen adaptations over forty years. It evaluates the progress that has been achieved in the way subordinated masculinities intersect with and challenge hegemonic masculinity and conjectures that such progress might lead to a more equitable alignment of gender hierarchies. Specifically, the chapter examines the dearth of gay characters in screen adaptations as well as their lack of complexity, the problematisation of homosexuality, the complex nature of homophobias, the desire for normalcy juxtaposed with the irreverence of queer politics and finally the agency of subordinated groups as seen through the emergence of inclusive masculinities.

The subordination of gay men constitutes the clearest illustration of how hegemonic masculinity manifests itself as a relational concept. Historically, it was the extreme violence and homophobia endured by gay men and women that created the need to construct, analyse and theorise about the nature and plurality of masculinities and the stratification that exists within the world of men. Stephen Morin and Ellen Garfinkle argue that "male homophobia is observed to serve the function of keeping men within the boundaries of traditionally defined roles" (29). Hegemonic masculinity, as argued in previous chapters, is not a collection of identifiable traits of Australian men but rather a category in a privileged alignment of different forms of masculinities that can be

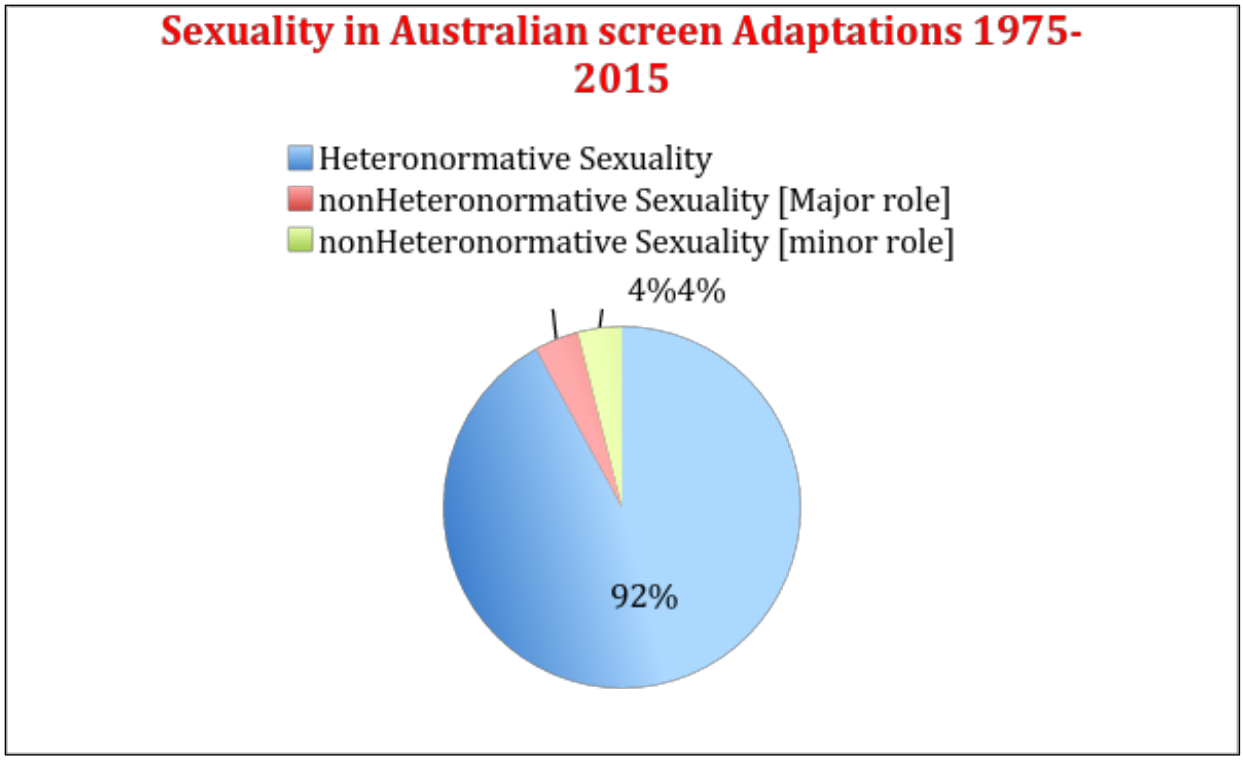

Fig. 32. A visual representation of the inclusion of subordinated masculinities in all Australian screen adaptations. These statistics were accrued after considering 362 screen adaptations between 1975 and 2015. The category 'minor' in this chart refers to the inclusion of minor gay characters, for example in *Lantana*. 'Major' denotes that the narrative has been composed from a gay point or view, or that the gay characters are the main characters in a text. For example, the adaptation of *Holding the Man*.

discerned in Australian screen adaptations between 1975 and 2015. Screen adaptations, as cultural artefacts, demonstrate that as a pattern of practice, hegemonic masculinity can be considered normative because it embodies "the currently most honoured way of being a man" (Connell and Messerschmidt 832) and simultaneously dispels facets considered to be undesirable. Such facets of masculinities, as discerned through the adaptations considered, are derided and invite both pity and fear. They also coincide with those associated with femininity, which according to Connell, might explain the ferocity of homophobic attacks perpetrated on gay men (*Masculinities* 78), outlined in the 2015 documentary by Paul Clarke and Alex Barry, *Between a Frock and a Hard Place*.[65]

Connell and James W. Messerschmidt argue (829) that hegemonic masculinities are perceptible at the intersection of three different levels: local (families and immediate communities), regional (society-wide level or nation-state) and global. This is particularly pertinent for screen texts which routinely represent complex personal relationships in an Australian context but via a medium that is consciously constructed to be consumed by a global audience. On the local level, as defined above, gay men have been routinely expunged from family histories as proposed by Andrew Gorman-Murray (20). The playwright Alex Harding highlights this obliteration of gay characters from families and communities in his play *Only Heaven Knows* (1988) which is an adaptation of the 1961 novel *At the Cross* by Jon Rose.[66] Harding uses a dead drag queen, Lea Sonia, as the protagonist of his play precisely because gay characters had "been written out of history" (Hurley 50). Gay men have also, largely, been an absent constituency from the Australian national narrative as Fig. 32 apprises. More importantly, gay men have been, almost exclusively, represented outside the mantle of the working-class battler, a designation

[65] The 2016 cross-genre and cross-platform four-part miniseries *Deep Water*, screened on SBS, also dramatizes such attacks.
[66] Considered to be the first novel in Australian literature to have been written from a gay point of view.

that is "centralizing and hegemonic" in defining Australian masculinity (Whitman 52). Unsurprisingly, as a result of this debarment from the national narrative, gay men have tended to identify more with a global sense of a gay identity, resulting in the embracing of a consumerist-derived notion of self, that is surprisingly similar throughout developed countries, despite national boundaries. It is for this reason that a discussion of subordinated masculinity in Australia cannot be separated from the intersectionality of masculinity at the regional, national and international levels.

The problematisation of homosexuality

The subordination of gay men is made possible by discursive practices that historically and culturally pathologise homosexuality and exclude it from the grand narrative of Australian identity, which according to Shirleene Robinson, has enjoyed a masculinist and heteronormative status since the early days of colonialism (21). By consigning homosexuality alongside illness, criminality and social aberration, homosexuality is assigned to a less-than desired subordinated status and becomes a category to be pitied, feared and dismissed. Because of this consignment, the subordination of gay men within a hegemonic masculinist framework greatly advantages men of a heteronormative status. Michael Flood and Clive Hamilton identify this as an example of heterosexism which they view as "a pervasive part of societal laws, customs and institutions" (17).

The problematisation of homosexuality is inseparable from semiotics and meaning-making in general, since the classification of the homosexual was primarily an externally imposed category that first appeared within sexology and then in the judicial and psychiatric fields of knowledge (Vallochi 215). Homosexuality remained as a pathology in the authoritative *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM) until 1973,

when a condition called "ego-dystonic homosexuality" was created for the DSM's third edition in 1980. At the Australian regional level, acceptable national configurations of sexuality and sexual desire were shaped through the criminalising and pathologising of homosexuality. When the British colonised Australia, only two crimes were worthy of the death penalty: murder and sodomy (Johnston and Johnston 38) which illustrates how the law dictates some aspect of appropriate masculine sexuality in addition to dominant ideologies.

Non-normative sexuality is considered a betrayal of mateship and homosociality and is often rechannelled as violence. The adaptation intertexts of *An Indecent Obsession* (1985), set in the dying days of WWII, explicate this through the backstory of the unnamed farmer who, whilst fighting for his country, is identified as a homosexual and subsequently is killed, ostensibly by enemy fire, but was, in fact, a victim of what we now recognise a hate crime. From the 1950s onwards, a distinct shift in government policing of homosexuality from a passive to a proactive stance can be discerned. In the story of the nation, heterosexuality worked as a marker of normalcy and homosexuality as deviance. In this period, deviance was perceived as a danger to the nation and was unacceptable even if it remained confined. In 1958, a former NSW Police Chief Superintendent denounced homosexuality as "Australia's greatest menace" (Willett "From Vice" 119). Even if homosexuality was inconspicuous it had to be annihilated and consequently, the authorised state apparatus, instigated policies of entrapment and eradication, designed to 'flush out' the invisible homosexual (Willett 10-11). Such an insidious invigilation of the performativity of certain types of masculinity is communicated in the 2015 documentary *Between a Frock and a Hard Place* which provides

insights into the institutional persecution of homosexuals as well as how medical perceptions about, and treatments of, homosexuality can be considered homophobic.

This documentary, directed by Paul Clarke and Alex Barry demonstrates the organic nature of the adaptation process because, even though it ostensibly celebrates the twenty-first birthday of *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* by seeking to explore its cultural context, it also reveals how the personal story of drag artist Cyndi Pastel has been adapted into the narrative impetus of *Priscilla. Between a Frock and a Hard Place* examines the social, cultural and historical conditions against which the defiant challenge to perceptions of Australian masculinity in *Priscilla* took place. In this way, it illustrates how homosexuality at the time was problematised; viewed not only as a social aberration

Fig. 33. Cyndi Pastel pictured in 2015 from the ABC website. Her life story as a drag artist, including her journey to the Outback to be reunited with her biological son, became the narrative of Elliot's film, *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*.

but also as a pathology within a framework of hegemonic masculinities.

The documentary achieves this by outlining the historical context in which *Priscilla* was constructed; a time in Australian social history when homosexuality was still illegal in Tasmania and a time in which the gay community was trying to survive following the catastrophic impact of AIDS. Narrator Terrence Stamp, informs the audience "the stain of homosexuality as a mental illness in the 1970s still lingered." According to historian Garry Wotherspoon, interviewed for this documentary, men identified as homosexuals were subjected to aversion therapy and to lobotomies, demonstrating the pathologisation of homosexuality. Mardi Gras activist Peter Murphy, also interviewed, attests to the routine subordination of homosexual men, "you could lose your job, you could lose your house, your friends and family" (45:04). His comments, summarising the reality existing within subordinated masculinities, is accentuated by archival ABC news bulletins reporting on the increased wave of gay bashings because, as articulated in the documentary, "poofta" bashing or "rolling some poofters" was considered a sport for heterosexual men in the 1980s. Sue Thompson, the inaugural Gay and Lesbian police liaison officer with the NSW Police, confirms this, identifying poofter bashing as a rite of initiation for heterosexual young men and gangs to prove their manliness and heterosexuality. In the documentary, John Russell is cited as one such victim who was bashed to death in 1989 but whose passing was officially dismissed by the Police as a suicide. Russell's death is such a clear illustration of the tension that exists between subordinated gay men and members of dominant masculinities who, in their delusional state, contested the privileged status of hegemonic heteronormativity by their act of aggression and excoriating violence.

The documentary also includes archival footage from a former ABC current affairs program, *Monday Conference*. In a special live episode, televising a meeting between gay activists and residents of Mt Isa, one of the latter asks, "why are poofs and perverts allowed to run down the street and rape and murder little babies?" (45:47) before another member of the audience throws excrement at the activist, who calmly tries to reason with the agitated mob. As a further sign of the repositioning of subordinated masculinities within the hegemonic framework, the documentary includes archival reports that John Russell's suicide case was reopened in 2003. The then Deputy State Coroner of NSW found that Russell was physically and brutally assaulted before he was thrown off the Bondi cliffs. Mr Russell's case was not unique. According to police records, eighty similar cases involved the alleged suicide of homosexual men. This institutional response from the NSW Coroner is a stark contrast to earlier institutional responses from the NSW Police, that can be best described as homophobic, and is indicative of the social gains achieved through challenging preeminent heterosexist attitudes in society over the last twenty-five years.

Another arena in which homosexuality is represented as problematic, involves the status of gay men as citizens. Gay men are part of the national population but their subordinated positioning within a framework of hegemonic masculinities highlights issues pertinent to citizenship and transgression. Given that sexuality and gender function in national stories to produce feelings of being Australian, it might be assumed that being heterosexual, is synonymous with being Australian. Gargi Bhattacharyya views sex as being "central and formative to the social… as the arena in which the subject is made" (5). Sexuality can be understood as the cultural, biological, gendered, personal and intellectual aspects of identity formed in terms of desire and the term 'normative' refers

to the requirement that all members of society adhere to what is being perceived as normal. This form of normative sexuality, as represented in 92% of the adaptations examined, can be described as "compulsory heterosexuality" (Rich 227), a way in which sexuality is inscribed in masculinity and determines its shape. Non-normative sexuality, desire and behaviour is not only problematised, but also demonised in Australian screen adaptations and remains antagonistic to hegemonic masculinity that is naturalised as quintessentially Australian.

The ghosting, neutering and lack of complexity of gay characters

With few notable exceptions, Australian screen adaptations position the characters of gay men on the periphery of society, and in subordinated positions, since their narrative function is to serve the narrative trajectory of the major characters. Damien Barlow notes that when the lives of gay characters manage to escape the erasure of history, they are still presented to audiences as figures associated with crime, punishment, death, humiliation and ridicule (8). Three such subordinated characters will be briefly referred to as part of this discussion. Interestingly enough, all three characters can be located within Barlow's aforementioned proposal and they all remain outside the category of the working-class battler; an esteemed positioning in the Australian psyche, as argued throughout this thesis.

Subordinated masculinities are often inseparable from stereotypes. Patricia Hill Collins expounds on the useful notion of "controlling images" which is relevant to the discussion of gay characters in this chapter (7). Controlling images refers to stereotypical, and thereby non-representative, cultural depictions of a specific group which are then used erroneously to disseminate alleged truths about such cultural groups. The stereotype

of the effeminate and bitchy gay man, more commonly referred to as a sissy, is one such example and it can be argued that the subordination of such characters is made possible by their effeminacy. The gay man as a licentious degenerate is yet another stereotype communicated in a number of Australian screen texts including Arnold in *High Rolling* (1977) and Doc Tydon in *Wake in Fright*. The use of stereotypes is unsurprisingly within a framework of subordination and intersectionality because dominant groups routinely employ stereotypes to ideologically and culturally subordinate more disempowered individuals. This is carried out through the process of ceaseless cinematic reiteration which creates for the viewer a precarious inclusionary/exclusionary binary. Richard Dyer references the work of Homi Bhabha in arguing that such interminable repetition calls into question the veracity of the stereotype itself, and specifically, the way it attempts to mask the fluidity of the power dynamic between enactments of masculinity (131).

The first marginalised gay character is Les Kendall in *Strictly Ballroom* who is presented through the cinematic stereotype of 'the sissy', which traditionally invites the derision of the audience. This is because 'the sissy' presents a chimerical version of masculinity that draws attention to heteronormativity, as Gary Morris explains in "Film Sissies" (2002). Two other peripheral characters, encountered in the critically-acclaimed arthouse films *Lantana* (2001) and *Candy* (2006). Patrick Phelan and Casper, respectively, are afforded some complexity of characterisation but they, like the aforementioned 'sissy', are also used by the creators of the adaptation intertexts, as a way of better understanding the major, heterosexual, characters.[67] Predictably, all three characters remain static throughout the narrative.

[67] Casper is not afforded a surname in the Davies novel, nor its adaptation.

Les Kendall in *Strictly Ballroom* can be viewed as the embodiment of a sissy; a category of a gay man "at once distinguishable from a regular man" (Dyer, *The Culture* 5). The sissy's primary function in texts is to make heterosexual men feel and appear on the screen as more potent and dominant. Seen from this perspective, the agency of subordinated men remains muted. In *Strictly Ballroom*, ageing and pompadoured Kendall, played by Peter Whitford, is a former dancing partner of the protagonist's mother and is represented as a figure of pathos because he has accepted his subordinated status as a sissy. This is demonstrated by Kendall's blind allegiance to the rules of the Federation and the tyrannical patriarchy, embodied by Barry Fife, who, nonetheless, dismissively calls him a "pathetic little fag" (1:17:24). This insidious internalisation of oppressiveness and acceptance of one's subordination has had a detrimental effect on Kendall, as shown when he is teaching Scott the waltz, in the most insipid and mechanical manner. Furthermore, it demonstrates how Kendall, literally, gives Fife permission to continue his domination over him, which comes close to the cultural studies definition of hegemony (Edgar and Sedgwick 64) and continues to fuel Fife's enactment of oppressive masculinity. Kendall remains at the periphery of society, far from the patriarchal dividend that is reserved for more authorized enactments of masculinity.

Equally as repressive, is the stereotype of a gay man as a licentious degenerate whose subordinated agency can threaten social stability. In order to avert this, the degenerate gay man, is either eliminated altogether, as seen in the *Candy* adaptation intertexts, or simply ostracised from a particular community as seen in *Lantana*, the filmic adaptation of the Andrew Bovell play, *Speaking in Tongues* (1998).

The correlation of homosexuality with illicitness and degeneracy is manifest in the adaptation of *Candy* through the character of Casper, played by Geoffrey Rush. The role

of the benign chemistry professor whose sexual proclivities appear to be focussed exclusively on exotic rent boys – "this is Jorge, very limited English but a very large penis" (09:29) – has been expanded significantly in the adaptation process to explicate to the viewer that heroin use and homosexuality are both taboo subjects and social afflictions, but they can also act as signifiers of a subordinated masculinity. The film adaptation, notwithstanding, affords Casper some complexity of character. He is professionally employed and assumes a parental role towards the young protagonist Dan, as evident by the following melancholic voice-over, "Casper was like the dad you always wanted, one who lets you have lollies and fizzy drinks" (09:07). Dan's estimation of Casper can be seen in Fig. 34. Despite the remarkable acting of Rush, particularly his ability to simultaneously communicate geniality as well as predatoriness, he remains a

Fig. 34. The centrality of Casper in Dan's life is visually represented in this scene from the film through his positioning (*Candy* 22:23).

peripheral figure of pathos, who dies of a heroin overdose.

Despite the sympathy that Casper may elicit from audiences, he still functions within the stereotype of an irresponsible degenerate, as does the character of the elusive Patrick Phelan, played by Peter Phelps, in *Lantana*. Both men are financially secure and this economic status is, saliently, another way in which their otherness is communicated to audiences. Phelan has been transmogrified from the character of Sarah in the Bovell hypotext, who is having an affair with the therapist's husband, John. By changing the character's gender in the adaptation process, the film aligns male homosexuality to femininity; 'states' which in a gendered framework are rejected from hegemonic masculinity. Due to this significant change in the adaptation process, audiences familiar with the Bovell play are positioned to scrutinise John's performance of masculinity for possible signs of transgression. The relational positioning of homosexuality as a subordinated category to be rejected and despised is shown most vividly through the heterosexual detective, Leon, played by Anthony LaPaglia, who remains antagonistic towards Phelan intimidating him and physically threatening him.

According to the director in a special feature included in the *Lantana* DVD, Peter Phelps, who played Phelan, was coached extensively in order to expunge any camp intonations from his delivery and to depict a "straight-acting gay guy". It is noteworthy that the heterosexual actor prepared for his role by assuming the kinesics and vocalics associated with a camp persona. Also of interest here is the befuddled misnomer "straight-acting gay guy" used by the creative team. Mr Phelps is not alone in his endeavour to authentically communicate his role to audiences. Valentina Cartei and David Reby report that actors playing homosexual characters feminize their voice by firstly increasing their mean fundamental frequency, resulting in a higher pitch and secondly by raising overall

formant frequencies spacing that results in a less baritone timbre (81). What this suggests is, that a self-identified gay man is perceived to *always* be enacting, and thereby, contesting a type of masculinity, outside his naturalised subordinated one, a masculinity which is somehow an inauthentic one. This resonates with Judith Butler's claims that acts, gestures and enactments are "fabrications manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs" (185).

In *Lantana*, Phelan is established as an unlikeable character because he sees love as a contest he doesn't like to lose. He attempts to justify his current relationship with a man who "comes encumbered, with a wife" (1:10:19) to his therapist, who finds him threatening and doesn't approve of his actions. Discounting the unprofessionalism of an experienced therapist openly displaying her disapprobation of her patient, Phelan attempts to goad her into understanding his point of view. He tells her, "I'm a respite from a marriage that's gotten too hard… he takes refuge in me in what I offer him… sex unencumbered by need" (41:21). Unlike all other male characters, Phelan's otherness is communicated through the tight-fitting shirts he wears and by the fact that the cinematographer isolates him within the cinematic frame.

A further sign of Phelan's status as an outsider is the fact that he is seen living in a comfortable, inner-city, Darlinghurst apartment, and not in the world of the inner-west, or the suburbia of the northern beaches. Phelan, as seen in one of the film's penultimate scenes, hovers in an exoteric space, signalling his status as a failed interloper in the normative world of sexuality and family. Phelan occupies a peripheral space and through his unabashed actions, poses a threat to the monogamy at the core of heteronormative relations. As such, Phelan can be associated with the lantana plant that thrives in liminal spaces. By this association with the flamboyant lantana flowers, incidentally used in

flower essences as a medicine for sexual dysfunction, the character of Phelan is diminished to the status of pest; a figure to be simultaneously pitied and feared.

Before proceeding with this section of the chapter, it is worth addressing the pervasive historical and cultural invisibility of gay characters from screen texts. One of the few advantages of the fidelity conundrum in adaptation studies is the emphasis on what is visually absent from the screen. In turn, this 'absence' can be used constructively to appraise the ghosting, or invisibility, of gay characters in screen texts. Vito Russo in *The Celluloid Closet: Homosexuality in the Movies* (1987) has explored the notion of camouflage and subterfuge in the identification of gay characters, which in most cases relies as much on interpretation, association and signification as it does on content. For example, bondage gear when used with hypermasculine bodies in *Mad Max 2,* is not only indicative of the lawlessness of the tribe that Max confronts, but also of homosexuality. Homosexuality is demonised in the film and presented as a binary of the normative

Fig. 35. Peter Phelps in *Lantana* (1:40:01). The character is ostracised at the conclusion of the film and presented as a pest as a result of his refusal to remain within the realm of subordinated masculinities.

sexuality personified by the hapless protagonist in the original *Mad Max*. The British actor, Simon Callow, similarly asserts that, "every homosexual was an expert decoder, as skilled as any to be found at Bletchley Park" (8) a comment disclosing the pleasure involved in various subject positions when viewing screen texts. *Looking for Alibrandi* (2000), *The Odd Angry Shot* (1979) and *Proof* (1991) all provide examples which could be construed as 'gay' by gay audiences. Gay spectators denied the pleasure of identifying with representations of themselves can, and do, read against the grain, since resistant readings "depend largely on the experience of the audiences" as asserted by Colin Sparks (88). By doing so, they oppose hegemonic ideologies.

All three characters mentioned in this chapter so far, remain subordinated within society, because their sexuality poses a threat to the imprimatur of heteronormativity. In the case of *Women He's Undressed* (2015) and *Peter Allen: Not the Boy Next Door* (2015), however, the obfuscation of homosexuality is, additionally, aligned within an economic imperative. As communicated in the Orry-Kelly biographical adaptation, and far more unambiguously in *Peter Allen: Not the Boy Next Door,* when gay men are the protagonists of an adaptation, their visibility as gay men is camouflaged, mainly for reasons associated with consumerism. In the case of Peter Allen, a myriad of associates, friends, family members and business executives stand to substantially benefit from his artistic endeavours as long as Allen maintains the façade of heteronormativity, albeit a flamboyant one. This, the adaptation suggests, is because the audiences for his shows and records were not ready to support an openly-gay artist. These two screen adaptations of iconic Australian gay men, released in 2015, rely on camp and kitsch aesthetics, such as those embraced with such panache by Baz Luhrmann, to add to the enjoyment of viewers who, through the benefit of hindsight, have no qualms regarding the true sexual orientation of both artists. Both

camp and kitsch were antithetical to literary refinement and discernment but the dissolving of formal boundaries between high and low culture that characterised postmodernity has meant that aesthetics of camp and kitsch are no longer always repugnant to audiences. In *Redefining Kitsch and Camp in Literature and Culture*, Justyna Stępień (2014) asserts that camp and kitsch aesthetics have transformed "the cultural landscape, enriching visual and linguistic spaces with what was formerly only acclaimed as marginal and tasteless" (1).

Both *Women He's Undressed* and *Peter Allen: Not the Boy Next Door*, were made decades after the death of their respective protagonists, at a time when gay characters no longer need to assume some "form of disguise that failed to fully recognise the characters' sexual orientation" (Lowndes par. 3). The careers of Orry-Kelly and Peter Allen unfolded in a cultural context of threatening sexualities and middle-class anxieties over gender non-conformity. Homosexuality was traditionally considered box-office poison and accordingly, gay characters were elided from screen programs, or camouflaged and routinely relegated to the periphery. James W. Messerschmidt in "Masculinities as Structured Action" argues that the recognition of sex and sexual preference depends on a host of recognisable bodily signs on display, such as hair, costuming, facial features, musculature, voice, mannerism, deportment which "through this embodied presentation we 'do' sex and it is this doing that becomes a substitute for the concealed genitalia" (207).

In *Women He's Undressed*, Darren Gilshenan portrays Orry-Kelly in a knowing way which is a homage to the man's status as a confident, risqué storyteller and talented individual who often disdained the sexual mores of his own era. The narrative cohesiveness of the re-enacted scenes in Armstrong's film, proves to the audience that Orry-Kelly was a man

prepared to "rock the boat" both in his entrepreneurial skills and through his private life, particularly his long-term liaison with struggling British actor, Archie Leach, later to achieve Hollywood superstardom as Cary Grant.

Kelly's professional standing as an incomparably talented designer is attested by the talking heads employed in the documentary, the plethora of archival footage of his designs assembled by Armstrong as well as by Kelly's three Academy Awards and numerous other accolades. By Kelly's own admission, "anyone who knows anything about the Aussies knows we have spunk and spine. Too bloody right we have" (Kelly 255). Yet some thirty pages later in his memoir, Kelly confesses, "I am anything but typical of the lean sun-drenched horse-borne Aussie" (280). Through highlighting this seeming paradox in her film adaptation, Armstrong both reasserts the 'lost' Australian identity of Kelly and proposes that, in the context of 2015, such a colourful character can assume his rightful and pivotal place in new narratives that challenge the heteronormativity associated with national imaginings.

In the television adaptation of Stephen MacLean's effusive biography of Allen, *Peter Allen: Not the Boy Next Door*, which proved to be a ratings success for the Seven Network in 2015, Peter Allen is represented as a talented gay artist, twenty-three years after his death. During Allen's life and career, as communicated by the adaptation intertexts, the hegemonic order, consisting of a number of powerful men, attempted, and largely succeeded in rendering Allen's conspicuous homosexuality invisible in order to capitalise on his talent.

Allen himself was complicit in this attempt to camouflage his homosexuality because he wanted to enjoy the patriarchal dividend that is associated with success as a performer

and also because he was cognisant of the prevailing ideology, social conditions and laws relating to homosexuality in Australia. When Allen is caught *in flagrante delicto* by the Lismore police, at a time when homosexuality was not merely invigilated by the agents of hegemonic order but was still unlawful and punishable in NSW, his manager, Chris Bell, matter-of-factly admits, "this could ruin you Peter" (disc 1 47:17). Allen's own father, as communicated in the intertexts was certainly not accepting of his son's sexuality. Dick Woolnough tells the young Peter, in the miniseries, "you know how hard it is for me with you the way you are?" (disc 1 24:02) and the viewer might be excused for interpreting that his failure as a father to recalibrate his son's sexuality might be a contributing factor in his subsequent suicide. The dramatic way the television adaptation highlights Mr Woolnough's death is an illustration that the cost of homophobia operates on a macro level in society and impacts on all people, not just the GLTBIQ community alone (Robinson 42).

The intersectionality and dissidence between subordinated and dominant masculinities is pervasive in the adaptation intertexts and is connected both to Allen's sexuality as well as his talent, working in "a bigot's medium" (MacLean 331). MacLean's biography commences with an epigram where Allen describes himself as "the other side of Crocodile Dundee" (MacLean 1), disclosing a larger-than-life personality that can describe both men. Whereas Mick Dundee's prodigious personality is celebrated in Australia's culture, Allen's had to be sequestered because it is associated with homosexuality, a state that must be subordinated. Allen's first professional manager, Peter Bell, remarks in the miniseries, "we have to calm him down a bit" (disc 1 36:34). A former member of *Bandstand* recalls, "Peter was flamboyant even then" (MacLean 59). Later, Allen's Hollywood record producers wonder, "how are we supposed to market

this fruit" (disc 2 17:11). Even his sympathetic manager, Dee, who adopts the role of a father figure for Allen, affectionately confides in him, "we might have to defruit you just a little" (disc 2 35:20).

Allen's sexuality is complex and individualistic and this demonstrates that positioning an individual within a discursive category, such as subordinated masculinities, is limiting. Certainly, Allen is gregarious, circumspect, and possessing a strength of character that is associated with his growing up in regional Australia. His biographer writes, "there had not been any gay politics to reinforce Peter Woolnough growing up in an Australian bush town. He had to be tough to survive" (MacLean 179). Allen is also self-reliant and autarkic and these qualities are certainly the ones responsible for both his identification as well as disassociation with more recognisable elements within subordinated masculinities, such as the political gay activism proliferating during his years as an active performer.

Allen fails to recognise his lack of explicit identification with the gay community as responsible for the lack of support he receives, as he bitterly complains in the miniseries. This is ironic since Allen had married Liza Minelli, the daughter of Judy Garland, the popular culture icon whose portrayal of Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz* came to euphemistically identify homosexual men, as "friends of Dorothy" (Leap and Boellstorff 98). Graham Blundell recognises this dichotomy associated with Allen's appeal to audiences and sees his "distinctive style of camp… too gay for the straights but not gay enough for the gays" (par. 6). MacLean, remarks more bluntly, "the ghetto was in and Peter Allen was out… a faggot rejected by faggots" (176). What the hypertext highlights is the juxtaposition of sexuality and artistic success within the framework of hegemonic masculinities. Allen, forced to live furtively as a gay man, succeeds in writing lucrative

songs for other performers and generating substantial profits for his record executives and management, but it is only when he channels the agency to be found within his subordinated status as a gay man that he begins to find success as an artist in his own right and starts to perform his own songs.[68] In this manner, by celebrating the success of Allen as an artist, but more importantly, by rejoicing in his considerable achievement as an Australian, the adaptation is successful in challenging the exclusion of homosexual men from the national narrative.

Camping the Outback

No other screen text has challenged both the heteronormativity and the grand narrative of Australian identity as profoundly as Stephan Elliot's film, *The Adventures of Priscilla, the Queen of the Desert*. Using the familiar tropes of a road movie, Elliott's film bestows psychological insight into its three protagonists as recompense for undertaking the arduous journey to the heart of Australia. Along the way, the film "fractures accepted sexual behaviour and gender by proclaiming sexual fluidity as a legitimate identity in itself" (Brooks 85). *Priscilla* explores aspects of the Australian national identity that have been largely ignored previously and resolves these optimistically within its comedic narrative as suggested by Jonathan Rayner (*Contemporary Australian* 129).

The film is a cinematic reimagining of the picaresque novel, which typically recounts the adventures of a likeable larrikin of low status who lives by his wits, not unlike the iconic characters of Barry McKenzie or Mick Dundee, prompting Graeme Turner to call Elliot's work an "ocker film in drag" (*National Fictions* 360). This view is reinforced by Peter C. Kunze who adds that such, "hypermasculine comedies use humour to defuse

[68] Including "I Honestly Love You" for Olivia Newton-John, "Don't Cry Out Loud" for Melissa Manchester and the Oscar-winning "Arthur's Theme (Best That You Can Do)" for Christopher Cross.

the suppressed queerness in both the homosocial relationship and the androcentric spaces where the stories transpire" (52). The transgender Bernadette Bassinger and the two drag queens are unlikely heroes for an Australian comedy but their status at the lowest rank of subordinated masculinities is used to illuminate the schism between subordinated and dominant masculinities.

The problematisation of homosexuality in the film is apparent because of the refusal of the three leads to accept their subordinated status. This is evident when they do not compromise their identity or hide their otherness in their Outback adventures. Tenaciously, they succeed in overcoming a series of obstacles including the rebirthing of the Priscilla bus in a suitable lavender colour, in order to obliterate the homophobic attack in Broken Hill, where the phrase "AIDS fuckers go home" has been graffitied on the side of the bus, and averting Felicia Jollygoodfellow's bashing in Coober Pedy.[69] Jollygoodfellow's intrusion into the homosocial zone of dominant masculinity, which Catriona Elder claims is "organised around an oppressive and confronting mateship principle" (315) is presented as a clear transgression of the homosocial rules in Australian society and one which must be subordinated by denunciation and brutal violence. The climax of this scene occurs when the dominant Alpha male, who physically engulfs the frame, realises that Jollygoodfellow is a transvestite. The contempt he suddenly feels for Jollygoodfellow is a clear enactment of what he perceives to be an entitlement of his masculinist superiority, and interestingly enough, his derision is magnified because it is enacted in front of his mates, who endorse his heteronormative status and ratify his response.

[69] lavender was widely associated with male homosexuality in the years before 1975. Specifically, the term lavender boys to describe homosexual men also enjoyed currency in the mid 20th century.

The intersectionality of hegemonic with subordinated masculinities, shown through the problematisation of homosexuality, is not only put on display here for the viewer but also is used to challenge the supremacy of dominance that is associated with hegemonic masculinities. The confrontation between the Miner and Jollygoodfellow's rescuer, the transsexual Bassinger, is ironically resolved when the latter uses physical violence, normally associated with hegemonic masculinities, to incapacitate the former. A subtler example here of the intersectionality between hegemonic and subordinated masculinities is signalled by the presence of the heterosexual mechanic Bob Spart, played by Bill Hunter, who even though appears at ease with the homosocial order of the miners, nonetheless harbours romantic feelings for Bassinger. This dichotomy within Spart is used by Elliot knowingly to reiterate that all gendered enactments are simply performative and not indicative of the complexity of human interaction.

Through the depiction of non-normative sexuality, the emphasis on how anatomical bodies can, and do act, as well as a disavowal to represent homosexuality as problematic, the film challenges gendered notions of masculinity. Interestingly enough, young Benjamin, the progeny of Mitzy Del Bra, has no qualms about how masculinity ought to be enacted. He only appears uninterested in his father when the latter is in drag as a straight male, at the foothill of King Canyon, whilst Bassinger and Del Bra are getting "frocked up" in their attempt to "stake a claim upon a landscape which seeks to repel them" (Rayner 159). The acceptance of Del Bra as Benjamin's father and, especially, the latter's request to let him see the Abba show he is famous for, is testament to the lack of homophobia in the younger man. This incident, precedes the film's apotheotic scene of the "three cocks in a frock on a rock" (1:34:11) which Brett Farmer views as a "spectacular moment of gender transgression" (82) whilst Rayner identifies it as a

"drastic departure from the stereotype of Australian masculinity… in national cinema" (158).

Homophobia(s)

Steve Valocchi argues that "the social construction of gay identity in the twentieth century took place in a structural context of State control of 'threatening' sexualities and middle-class anxieties over gender non-conformity" (208). As shown in *Priscilla*, homophobia and transphobia are a fear of and prejudice against people who are perceived to be homosexual or trans respectively, or more generally, who do not conform to mainstream male or female gender norms. Homophobia, in its many forms, is evidenced when people censure, stigmatise, belittle, traumatise and oppress others through homophobia, cultural practices and the law as a way of maintaining their own privileged position. Homophobia is observable through political exclusion, derision, physical assaults, economic discrimination, personal boycotts and legal violence.

In "Masculinity as Homophobia" (1994), Michael S. Kimmel identifies homophobia as "a central organizing principle of our cultural definition of manhood" (214) which goes beyond the literal stigmatisation, victimisation and suffering of men perceived to adhere to non-normative modes of sexuality. Similarly, Connell identifies homophobia as a mechanism by which hegemonic masculinity is both formed and upheld (*Masculinities* 40). Additionally, Tristan Bridges and C. J. Pascoe argue that "homophobias can also operate as complex forms of gendered practice" (412). Different complex and nuanced forms of homophobias abound and are utilised not only to declare the denunciation of homosexuality but to also iterate relations of power and inequity. Homophobia can be

viewed as a process whereby young men, especially, "socialise each other into normative masculine behaviours, practices, attitudes and dispositions" (Bridges and Pascoe 415).

Even though the Australian screen adaptations examined in this thesis contain an abundance of incidents and examples of homophobia, both subtle and palpable, I will restrict the discussion to two such instances. The first, in *The Slap*, illustrates how homophobia is used as an agent of socialisation and the second, in *The Everlasting Secret Family*, symbolises how homosexuality is anathematized with femininity and must be duly eliminated from enactments of masculinity.

In *The Slap* intertexts all the male heterosexual characters "seem to simmer with suppressed rage, resentment or bewilderment" (Hawker 58) against women and men codified as the other, which includes gay men. This relates to one of the primary intentions of Christos Tsiolkas which is to show that homophobia is a reality in contemporary Australia; an insidious reality that informs all Australians how men relate to one another ("Me and" 182). One of the eight narrators of *The Slap,* Harry, whose sexual libido can only be satiated by his attractive trophy-wife, Sandi, and his more unpretentious mistress, repeatedly, and nauseatingly, refers to other men, including his cousin Hector, as *pousti*[70] and uses incendiary homophobic language when reprimanding an errant employee. Harry tells his employee Con, "I'll put a wrench through your fucking teeth and I'll fuck you up the arse with a screwdriver like a faggot at a choir boy's picnic" (*The Slap* 95). Interestingly enough, Harry's Vietnamese acquaintance, Van who supplies him with pirated DVDs, also uses the term *pousti* prolifically but in a humorous manner as a way of signalling the denunciation of unmasculine behaviours which have nothing to do with same-sex desire. Particularly alarming is the reality, as communicated

[70] The derogatory word for gay in Greek.

in *The Slap* intertexts, that homophobia is a cross-generational phenomenon, not restricted to men in their thirties and forties, who are the main subjects of *The Slap* intertexts, but also a phenomenon accepted by the older and younger characters as well. Con, Harry's father, reprimands his wife, "you want to turn him into a fucking pousti" (*The Slap* 91) as a way of protesting against her demonstration of excessive sympathy and softness to their child. In the novel, we are introduced to schoolboy Ali, in a crowded tram, when he tells his school friend Richie, who's humming a song, "hey faggot. Shut it" (*The Slap* 139). This may just signal the importance of jocularity in the platonic relationships between men, but nonetheless, it also reveals a contestation of power.

Another instance of homophobia can be observed in Michael Thornhill's 1988 film of *The Everlasting Secret Family* which was adapted from Frank Moorhouse's novella of the same name. The adaptation involves a secret brotherhood of homosexuals who are represented as paedophilic predators and sadistic opportunists. As such, the film unleashes the homophobia of the audience. All men in *The Everlasting Secret Family* are homosexual and representatives of Australia's privileged hegemonic classes. This group includes diplomats, businessmen, medical professionals, education experts and legal representatives all of whom collude with the Senator, played by Arthur Dignam, to share 'the youth' sexually after his erotic, and sadistic, initiation into the secret society of lascivious homosexuals. The youth confesses, "my relationship was with the great and the powerful, in a special way, to serve and belong to the elite" (220).

Moorhouse's parody is well intentioned in the novella, as a challenge to the imprimatur of patriarchal society but it is undermined by the conservative nature of his representation of 'passive' homosexuals assuming the sexual role of women as well as patterns of behaviour associated with domesticity. As represented by the youth, who

remains anonymous throughout the novella and the film adaptation, power can only be exercised by 'feminised men' if they manipulate the sexual desires of dominant men yielding power, to their advantage. Even so, they need to acquiesce to normative men's demands. This is highlighted by the Senator's assignation of his lover, the youth, with his wife, evident by his insistence that the youth wear his wife's garments in a symbolic act of usurpation. The youth learns to pleasure other men through his body, particularly his anus and in this way homosexuality, as observed by Linzi Murrie, is presented more as an aberrant sexual practice to be feared and less than as an ontological phenomenon (173). Sedgwick's work supports this assertion by highlighting the demonisation of homosexuals, particularly, effeminate ones as a "feminine other" and presenting this as another manifestation of misogyny (3).

Inclusivity and Queer politics

Within the hegemonic masculinities framework proposed by Connell in *Masculinities*, and revised by her and Messerschmidt ten years later, two paradigms within the category of subordinated masculinities, as used to describe gay men, are perceptible. Firstly, the desirability for normalcy as part of a gay sensibility within the human condition. This invites a concomitant call of acceptance of gay people within all strata of society and is relayed in screen adaptations such as *The Sum of Us* and *Holding the Man* (2015). Secondly, and diametrically contrasted to the first, is the subversiveness and irreverence of queer politics, as witnessed in *Head On*. Queer politics can be seen as an aesthetic, socio-political and philosophical movement that aims to dismantle the binaries of heterosexuality/homosexuality and between masculine/feminine (McIntyre 83).

The adaptation intertexts of *The Sum of Us* and the elegiac *Holding the Man* are two texts which present the experiences of gay men with a degree of complexity as part of a tangible gay sensibility within the human condition. Both texts can be seen as polemical in their invocation of normalcy as a desirable attribute for gay men, and the hypotexts for both adaptations presage more recent social activism associated with Marriage Equality. In *The Sum of Us*, we are provided with a romance, using the tropes of a romcom, between two proudly-gay-identified young men whose family experiences vary greatly. Working-class plumber and footballer Jeff Mitchell is supported and nurtured by his father, played by Jack Thompson, who ostensibly assumes the role of 'best-friend' and whose illness at the end of the narrative, ironically, facilitates the film's happy dénouement. Mitchell's love interest, Greg, an electrician, is presented as a suitable mate for him. Both are of the same age. Non-effeminate, the two men both practise safe sex, and most importantly, neither of them experience any problem with their sexual orientation in terms of self-acceptance. In fact, other than the renowned heterosexuality of the actors playing them, Mitchell and Greg would be suitable poster-boys for gay liberation in the early 1990s. Tellingly, both are blue-collar workers, because the Australian man, much like the mythos surrounding the 'self-made man' in the United States, is social, youthful and, quite often, a manual labourer (Kunze 51). *The Sum of Us* stands alone as the only financially successful Australian adaptation, dealing with homosexuality, that presents both its leads within the realm of working-class masculinity that occupies such a central position in the Australian psyche.[71]

As part of the cultural divide between the romantic leads, Greg's family is oppressive and unsupportive of him, throwing him out of the family home, when Greg takes part in the

[71] See Appendix 2 - Top 100 Australian Feature Films of All Time

Mardi Gras parade.[72] Such a response is described by David Buchbinder as typical of the "penalties meted out to homosexuals (*Masculinities and Identities* 38). The experiences of Mitchell and Greg are telling. Brooks believes that Greg, as part of his cultural/cognitive experiences, readily accepts his ostracism from the nuclear family, at the hand of his patriarchal conservative father, but at the same time finds the utopic coexistence of the homosocial and homosexual elements in Mitchell's family life bewildering. This, prompts him to reject the latter's initial amorous advances (88).

The title of the film, in its use of the plural pronoun 'us', is an intentional ploy of the play and the film to include the audience in the exposition of the narrative. This is supported by the breaking of the fourth wall when Mitchell, and more frequently his heterosexual father, Harry, speak directly to the audience. Harry, played by iconic Australian actor Jack Thompson, is perceived by the audience as one of "us", the "we" of heteronormative sexuality. The peripheral character of his lover, Joyce Johnson, is intentionally expanded in the film adaptation to reinforce Harry's heterosexuality. This is pivotal because a plethora of paratexts associated with the filmic adaptation of *The Sum of Us*, as illustrated in Fig. 37,

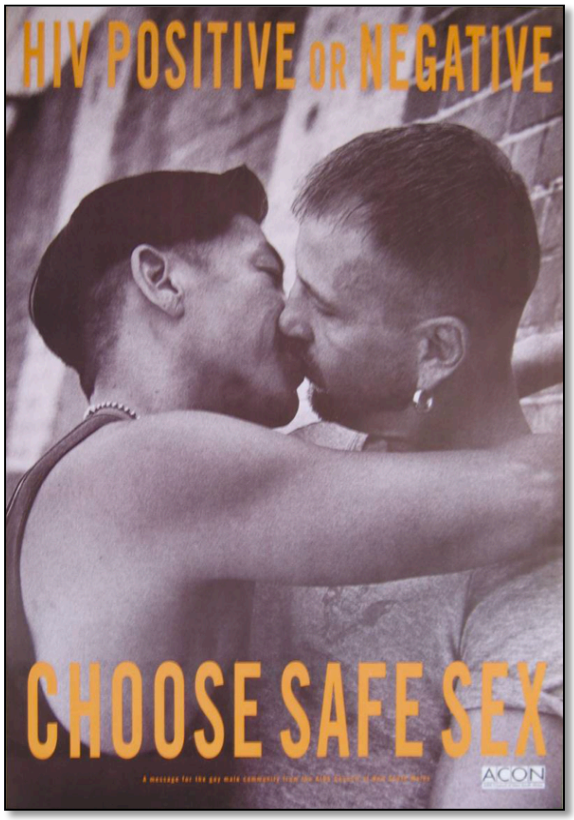

Fig. 36. A paratext to *The Sum of Us*. A safe sex campaign from ACON, a government-funded body, released in 1994 at the time of the film's release.

[72] a recognisable trope in the 'romance' genre, but particularly in romcoms.

focussed on the father/son relationship at the expense of the romantic tale between the two gay men.

Sexual identity is generally understood as a private issue but when this involves homosexuals it becomes a controlled aspect of identity and consequently is highly regulated within a framework of hegemonic masculinities. Throughout *The Sum of Us*, the gay characters' sex lives are closely monitored. Harry wants to protect his son from the taunts that he knows the youth will experience routinely. For example, Mitchell's nickname, 'backsto' is a constant reminder of the perceived threat he poses to his heterosexual mates. The film contains a series of slapstick scenes where the considerate father intrudes to monitor his son and potential lover just as they are about to kiss. While this might be viewed as solicitous behaviour, Kym McCauley points out that these scenes operate as part of a narrative of intrusion into and regulation of the gay couple's lives.

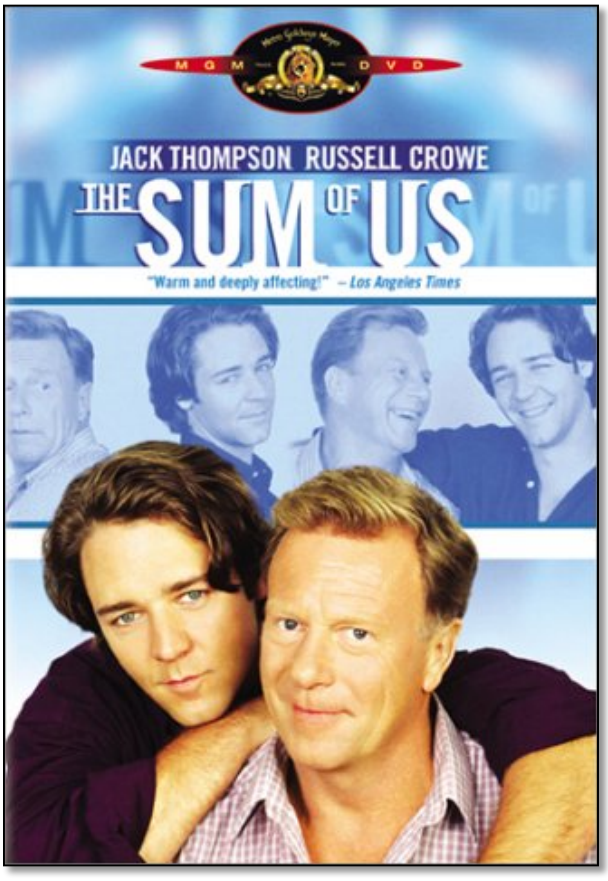

Fig. 37. The DVD cover of the film. Absent from this is the figure of Greg, Jeff's lover. Only the German DVD release displays the two lovers on its cover.

In *The Sum of Us* gay men in the early 1990s were understood as part of a national population and as such needed to be protected if the nation was to remain healthy. Government-funded research programs worked to achieve this end. However, the sexual practices and

techniques of safe sex outlined in such programs were understood as taboo subjects, considered perverted by many. As Weeks observes, "we can only understand sex-sex activities in their specific historical and cultural contexts" ("Making the Human Gesture" 12). The government health programs helped undermine the story of homosexuality as unAustralian. Weeks argues there are two main approaches to thinking about homosexuality and the nation: citizenship and transgression (Reynolds 5). The major achievement of *The Sum of Us* is, ironically, its didacticism about not seeing homosexuality as a transgression but rather as an integral process of citizenship and Australian identity, within the realm of normalcy.

The success of *The Sum of Us* may have been attributable to its embracing of white Anglo-Celtic hegemony and exaltation of family and mainstream societal values, such as mateship, sacrifice and monogamy. The film, particularly its conclusion, suggests that Mitchell and Greg will have no difficulty assimilating, or accepted into a world where they fit a heterosexual model. Mitchell himself asserts, "I don't want to live in a world that begins and ends with being gay" (54:39). A similar claim could be made about the casting of the film. The casting of heterosexual Russell Crowe, who had already played über-masculine men in *Proof, Romper Stomper*, *Hammers Over the Anvil* (1993) and *The Silver Brumby* (1993), as Mitchell and particularly his costuming, including football paraphernalia and blue singlet, facilitate his embodiment of the "rhetorical signs of heterosexual masculinity" (Buchbinder *Masculinities and Identities* 52). Jeff's ability to assimilate into mainstream society is aided by Crowe's broad Australian accent, 'blokey' voice, masculine gesturality and muscular physiognomy.

I would also argue that the film's invocation for acceptance and normalcy is achieved through its avoidance of AIDS as a significant issue in the film. *The Sum of Us* adaptation

intertexts, particularly the title of both play and film, invite audiences to consider the subordinated homosexuals as just another cultural minority that, in its totality, constitutes contemporary multicultural Australia. The *Holding the Man* adaptation intertexts also constitute a strong plea for normalcy through the interactions of the two protagonists within a recognisable, and endearing, social context that includes family, school, social activism and cultural communities.

Tim Conigrave's memoir, is part bildungsroman and part romance of his loving relationship with John Caleo that lasted until the death of both men from AIDS-related illnesses. The memoir, a rare testament of the initial impact of HIV/AIDS in Australia, was published posthumously, has never been out of print and constitutes a rallying point in Australian publishing as well as in the collective identity for gay Australian men. The subject matter of *Holding the Man,* the havoc unleashed by AIDS, is shared by the adaptations of Tony Kushner's 1993 *Angels in America* and Larry Kramer's 1985 *The Normal Heart*. Accordingly, through the process of intertextuality, *Holding the Man* can be considered as a cinematic companion piece to the aforementioned US adaptations. All three screen texts deal with love and loss, and have been adapted from polemical, dramatic works.[73] The literary source of all three adaptations is significant because literature has provided a vital source of identity for marginalised groups. Richard Dyer comments in *Gays and Film* (1984), "[b]ecause as gays, we grew up isolated not only from our heterosexual peers but also from each other, we turned to the mass media for information and ideas about ourselves" (1). All three adaptations concern themselves with a narrativisation of AIDS, are a poignant memorial to those perished in this modern plague and all contain within them a Puccinian love story (Pearl 112). Collectively, all

[73] *Holding the Man* has been adapted from both the memoir of the same name by Timothy Conigrave (1995) and the play, *Holding the Man* (2006), adapted by Tony Murphy.

three adaptations have found a wide audience because of the conscious manner in which they have tried to integrate, contextualise and normalise the experiences of gay men within society. It should be acknowledged, however, that in all three works, the death of the main character of an AIDS-related illness, can be seem to perpetuate the hegemonic point of view that any transgression from normative sexual behaviour results in marginalisation, isolation and is punishable by death.

The title of the Conigrave/Murphy/Armfield adaptation intertexts, 'holding the man' derives from AFL football and denotes a transgression that attracts a penalty. Accordingly, the title illustrates what can happen when Australian men transgress from the hallowed world of homosociality and platonic homoeroticism into homosexuality. Jake Wilson, in his review of the film, notes the connection between Armfield's film and many other Australian films, such as *Gallipoli* that used homoeroticism in its many guises. He writes that the film contains, "a belated acknowledgement of something which Australian cinema has known all along" ("Ryan Corr" par. 15). This intense mateship between men has been the subject of discussion for many Australian film commentators, including Jonathan Rayner.

Rayner's authoritative work on Australian cinema and his observations about the male ensemble film are also relevant here. He claims that the tradition of the male ensemble film reinforces the powerful patriarchal perspective of the historical past, as enacted in period films, at the expense of women and, I would claim also, those aligned within subordinated and marginalised masculinities. Rayner singles out *Newsfront* (1978) as an example where, "the central male character parallels the elegiac elevation of masculinity and nationality in the male ensemble films" (91). Seen from this perspective, Armfield's adaptation of a hypotext, "documenting the social shifts within the gay community over

30 years" (Brown Diane 185), can be considered a challenge to the hegemonic masculinity, that so dominated Australia's New Wave cinema.

Armfield, working within the socio-cultural context of 2015 and its exhortation of equality and egalitarianism, consciously wants to recall and critique much of the nostalgia that dominated Australia's New Wave cinema. He achieves this through cinematography. Anamorphic lenses, translated from the Greek to mean 'formed again', used by the cinematographer of *Holding the Man*, Germain McMicking is not only a suitable form of cinematographic apparatus to use for an adaptation of an adaptation, but also one that imbues the film with a certain nostalgia in recreating the recent past; eerily recalling Australia's preoccupation with heritage drama.

Neil Armfield, cognisant of the status of Conigrave's memoir that "steadily and quietly became a canonical work of gay Australian writing" (Kagan 149), has presented the central conflict of his film within a familial context. Bob Caleo's claim over the gay couple's possessions provides an insight into the contestation between hegemonic and subordinated masculinities. Tim Conigrave may not care about the possessions that belonged to his lover, John, but disposing of them by recapitulating to Bob's demands infuriates his moral outrage and inflames the tragic situation. Societal pressure and the relational nature of masculinities which are reconfigured at the expense of subordinated masculinities, not only deny Conigrave a voice and a place at John's funeral, but John's actual cause of death is also obfuscated, in favour of cancer. By this subterfuge Bob Caleo, whose grief over losing his son is tangible, denigrates the notion of a gay identity for his son and if anything, reasserts the popular, but nonetheless reprehensible,

confluence of the Grim Reaper with gay identity. Such a reaction can be contextualised within the socio-historical context of the original memoir.[74]

Michael Hurley quotes historian Graham Willett who asserts that the response to AIDS in 1987, two years after Conigrave and Caleo were diagnosed with HIV, "bordered on incitement to homophobic violence" (33). Adam Broinowski adds, "overall the parents' behaviour betrays a belief – let's hope it's a generational one – that the couple are responsible for their fate because of the unnaturalness of their union" (235). By highlighting such a social injustice, the film can engage its more enlightened audience of the present-time in its call for normalcy and inclusivity. Ryan Corr, who plays Conigrave in the film adaptation, tells Brian Karlovsky that the man he is portraying would be thrilled that the story is, "still pushing agendas and having a broad reach" (16).

The responsiveness of both mainstream audiences and critics to both *Holding the Man* and *The Sum of Us*, can illustrate the efficacy of subordinated masculinities to contest a more influential space with the hegemonic framework of masculinities by highlighting cultural similarities between different communities and by avoiding subversiveness. The latter, alongside irreverence is more characteristic of queer politics which, through the intensity of otherness, comprises a transgressive challenge against normative masculinity.

Unlike Gay/Lesbian Studies which restricts its examination and scope into areas dealing with gay and lesbian people and subjects, Queer Studies problematises traditional sexual norms. It involves itself with any subject that has been seen as contrary to normative behaviour and has conventionally been appraised as 'deviant'. Queer theory and thinking

[74] In the mind of the populace and the popular media, the Grim Reaper 1987 television campaign created by Siimon Reynolds for the National Advisory Committee on AIDS (NACAIDS) was identified with homosexual men as attested by Jennifer Power, "gay men came to be associated with the Grim Reaper and were seen as a threat to the community, rather than being victims of the disease" (*The Conversation*).

as an extension of poststructuralism, embraces the notion that definitions of sexuality, gender and identity are social-cultural constructs that only enjoy currency depending on context. According to Noreen Giffney and Myra Hird, a queer paradigm endeavours to "undo normative entanglements and fashion alternative imaginaries" (4).

Head On, adapted from the novel *Loaded* communicates a contrasting view of gay men within hegemonic masculinity. Here, the hedonistic, angry, perturbed, immature and obsessional protagonist Ari is vehemently antagonistic towards the patriarchal values espoused by his father as he questions both his sexuality and his ethnic identity. More importantly perhaps, the film, as proposed by John Conomos in *Diasporas of Australian Cinema* (2009), "destabilises notions of mateship and the Australian national identity as a static logocentric construction" (121).

Alex Dimitriades was twenty-five when he made the film playing a nineteen-year-old. This casting decision aids the director in eliciting a more authentic macho demeanour from the performer due to his physiognomy and adult musculature. Design decisions, such as his very short cropped hair, permanent stubble and costume also contribute to the intentional performativity of his depiction of a troubled youth. Ari appears inseparable from his leather jacket which is used metonymically as a cinematic bridge between his rebelliousness, reminiscent of the disaffected youth played by James Dean in *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955), and his coding as a man of a non-normative sexuality, similar to the Al Pacino character in *Cruising* (1980). Casting a rampant heterosexual actor, already familiar to audiences for portraying heterosexual young men in a number of screen texts can, unconsciously, invite the audience to question the dissemination of

the actor's 'homosexual' performance, which in turn, buttresses the queer credentials of *Head On*.[75]

The *Loaded*/*Head On* adaptation intertexts represent Ari as an archetypal queer character determined to reject all values and categorisations associated with various ideological and gendered personas and identities. Ari, at nineteen, is still a literal teenager, who is content with hooking up and not dating. He explains that what attracts him to casual sex with men is that, "there's no responsibility towards the person you fuck with" (*Loaded* 74). Ari has no real interest in an intimate relationship, or indeed marriage equality, that both the novel and film adaptation infer would be welcomed by the proud gay figure of his friend Johnny/Toula. The latter's role in the film adaptation has been increased considerably and Johnny now occupies the role of a sidekick in a queer bromance. Johnny represents the more palatable embodiment of the homosexual experience which calls for visibility and equality within the egalitarian Australian community. Sadly, this is not achieved through political activism because the character lacks the resources and commitment to transform his singular protestation into a challenge of dominant ideology. Through the tension between Johnny/Toula and his immediate community one can observe the subtle ways in which hegemonic and subordinated masculinities intertwine. Johnny's unabashed homosexual identity, particularly his cross-dressing, sabotages not only his own standing within the Greek ethnic community of Melbourne but also that of his father who is shunned by other men because he fails to invigilate, and reprimand, Johnny's enactment of masculinity. Ivan Cañadas identifies Mr Petroukis, "as a secondary victim of homophobia… his fate explicates the workings of male homosocial relations" (44) in which heterosexuality is rendered both normative and obligatory.

[75] *The Heartbreak Kid, Heartbreak High, GP, Neighbours.*

Conomos suggests that Ari's sexuality can be explained as a form of internalised homophobia (122) although Ari is unconcerned with character introspection claiming he is neither a scholar nor a poet. He boastfully states,

> I sleep with faggots but they always disappoint me… I do a good job of talking-like, walking-like, being a man. I've got the build, the swagger, the look. More, I've got the fuck-ya-I don't-give-a-shit attitude perfected to an art form. Faggots love sleeping with me, they think they've scored a real man (92).

Jean-François Vernay views Ari's refusal to categorise himself sexually as indicative of his "confused ideological stance" (42). Ari is primarily atomistic in all carnal contacts displaying an uncompromised individuality which is, "the lynch pin of masculinity" according to Bill Williams and Gisela Gardener (47). Ari's narcissism and hedonism cannot be viewed as symptomatic of his homosexuality, in the Freudian sense. His narcissism pertains to the pleasures of the body, both as an object of pleasure and as a means to pleasure. Ari actively denounces the dereliction of bodily care and when he reappears, fleetingly in another Tsiolkas novel, *The Slap*, he is a thirty-year-old gym-obsessed ethnic guy who supplies Hector with high quality drugs. Perhaps for Ari, "masculinity has become a set of postures; signifiers without a sign, an unattainable desire" as claimed by Ben Authers (142).

The final scene of the film is remarkable, with Ari at the end of his twenty-four-hour – long hedonistic journey dancing by the Williamstown pier, the site of so many migrant arrivals in the past. He tells the audience defiantly,

> I'm a whore, a dog, a cunt. My father's insults make me strong. I accept them all. I'm sliding towards the sewer, I'm not struggling…. I'm gonna live my life. I'm

> not going to make a difference. I'm not going to change a thing. No one's going to remember me when I'm dead. I'm a sailor and a whore, and I will be until the end of the world." (3)

This conclusion is consistent with the impulse and hyperkinetic energy of the film and it eschews the traditional happy, or reconciliatory ending, representing Ari's "life in the bloom of its irreconcilability" (Jorgensen 150). He remains proudly isolated in his abnegation, refuting the benefits of identifying himself with any one category within the hegemonic masculinities framework. By this "compelling assertion of self, of the 'I', in all its complication and multifariousness" (Plunkett 48), Ari demonstrates the agency of subordinated masculinities that manifests itself through subversiveness.

The agency of subordinated groups and the emergence of inclusive masculinities.

Connell and Messerschmidt in their re-examination of the hegemonic framework of masculinities, insist that "masculinities are configurations of practice that are accomplished in social action" (836). Examining screen adaptations in Australia between 1975 and 2015 supports this assertion as the understanding of gay men from a gendered perspective has shifted during this period from the notion of a biologically-born man embodying the mannerisms and demeanour of a woman to a more sociological perspective. That is, a man who desires someone of the same gender.

Eric Anderson in *Inclusive Masculinity* (2009) argues that the fear of extreme homophobia, which he calls homohysteria, has been waning on the cultural horizon, at least in the United States, so much so that young men "no longer fear being culturally homosexualised" (183) but can, alternatively, embrace an inclusive masculinity. One of the reasons provided by Anderson for this, is, bizarrely, the huge loss and grief endured

by the gay community during the AIDS crisis. He argues that the prolific number of deaths raised the visibility of gays within families, the workplace and cultural communities, making many realise that anybody could be gay. Such is the case encountered in the *Mull* (1988) intertexts. Steve is a young aspiring musician who is coming to terms with his sexuality and his affection for a fellow musician. In one scene, his father, played by Bill Hunter, is reading a sensational headline about the toll of AIDS splattered all over the afternoon edition of a newspaper daily. This headline becomes the catalyst for the father's anagnorisis, facilitating a happy dénouement, whereby the young gay man and his lover are both accepted and welcomed by the Mullens family.

Anderson also argues that the unremitting vehemence against homosexuals by religious zealots since the 1980s has had a divergent effect. It did not obliterate homosexuality, as was its intent, but rather rallied the general population in supporting equal rights based on their support for egalitarianism. Alison Keleher and Eric Ran Smith support Anderson's advocacy of inclusive masculinities in their quantitative research by citing a downward spiralling of homophobia in all demographics (124). Statistical research supports the notion that the general population has become more inclusive as indicated by Crosby Texter research in 2014. This research has found that 78% of all Australians support marriage equality but this could be seen as an assimilatory tactic which aims to engage hitherto subordinated individuals into the societal mainstream and by doing so reinscribe the privileged position of 'coupledom' and heteronormativity. Similarly, according to Connell and Messerschmidt: "hegemony may be accomplished by the incorporation of subordinated masculinities into a functioning gender order rather than by active oppression in the form of discredit or violence" (848).

Arlene Stein warns that emerging variants of homophobia are not merely usurping older manifestations but rather that they coexist with them (617). Such variants of homophobia include discourses associated with repudiation, confirmation and sexual aesthetics (Bridges and Pascoe 414). The intersection of hegemonic and subordinated masculinities in *Ruben Guthrie* takes place in Sydney. The eponymous character's cynicism and the enshrinement of a consumerist capitalist society are mirrored by Ruben's best friend, the gay character of Damian, played by Alex Dimitriades. Damian appears to be an embodiment of the hedonistic city determined to enable Guthrie and undermine his friend's abstemious attempts, "I haven't seen you in two and a half months… I want to drink all this untaxed booze with you… please don't tell me I can't express my love to you in the way we know best?" (Cowell 23). Luke Buckmaster describes Damian as "gay and decadently behaved best pal" (par. 7) and Damian is, certainly, a self-obsessed narcissist, just like his best friend. He truly believes Guthrie's sobriety is an affront to his own sensibility. "Why are you doing this to me?" (Cowell 37) he asks his best friend when the latter refuses to join him in a drinking-fest. Damian remains irresponsible and parasitic throughout the intertexts. He lost his highly-paid job in New York due to his braggadocio and salaciousness as he explains to Ruben, "I'm talking about bending the MD over the water cooler… fisting the MD, spit-roasting him with the black guy from Accounts" (Cowell 26).

Both Ruben and Damian are in advertising, both are equally narcissistic, ebullient, stylish, self-absorbed, self-destructive, but what the film implies is that Ruben is capable of redemption through love, as signalled in the final scene, whereas Damian will be confined to a life of degeneracy, as evident in the confronting ménage à trois scene, involving two men he has hooked up with via social media. More interestingly, the film

invites new insights into the traversal between hegemonic and subordinated masculinities. Guthrie's numerous protestations about his own heterosexuality whilst simultaneously supporting the gay rights and the 'lifestyle choices' of his friend, Damian, discloses that, perhaps, sexuality is a type of gender invigilation, beyond matters pertaining to identity, desire or practice (Bridges and Pascoe 414). Accordingly, when Guthrie calls Damian a "fucking faggot" (41:26), during a heated argument, this homophobic slur can be indicative of Damian's failure to enact a responsible and competent enactment of masculinity, albeit a gay one.

Like most screen adaptations that present a challenge to the enactment of subordinated masculinities, and thereby, it could be argued, present a positive portrayal of gay men,

Fig. 38. This scene from *Ruben Guthrie* visually illustrates how the two narcissistic males can be seen as parallel characters.

Season 1 of *Please Like Me*, also challenges the preconceptions of form. Josh Thomas adapted his stand-up comedy routines into the innovative television comedy show *Please Like Me* which defies generic categorisation since it utilises tropes from sitcoms, black comedy, documentary and drama, but relies for its impact on the oscillation between absurd scenarios and social realism. The persona presented by Thomas in his stand-up routines is a familiar one to his audience: charismatic, intelligent, befuddled, annoying, self-deprecating and slightly dishevelled. The distinct, slightly irritating voice redolent with bizarre upward phonological inflexions, that is associated more with femininity than masculinity, is also a by-product of the adaptation hypotext, and an identifiable aspect of Thomas' performing persona. It lends Thomas a uniqueness and aids him to downplay both insightful comments and punchlines, dispersed in the various episodes.

The notion of inclusivity is not only present in issues of sexuality but also in issues of form, finding an original way of using a plethora of screen tropes. The identification of Josh Thomas as a gay man occupies much of the narrative arc of the first season of *Please Like Me* and his centrality to the plot of the television program is significant, given the paucity of such occurrences in screen texts. Even though Thomas is the central character his [homo]sexuality is a mystery to himself but, nonetheless, it comes as no surprise to those closest to him. In fact, it is his girlfriend Stacey who explicitly tells him that he is gay. Neither of Josh's parents are surprised by the gay disclosure but his aunt Peg has no compunctions asking about the size of his testicles, in a futile attempt to locate a biological imperative for her nephew's homosexuality. Thomas' performance of a gay character on television is atypical but nuanced. He is awkward-looking, claiming he looks "like a 50-year-old baby" (S1E2, 14:22), lacks the confidence and worldliness encountered by other gay major recurring characters on TV such as those in *Will &*

Grace (1998-2006) and *Modern Family* (2009-), and he is sexually inexperienced, as indicated by his confessed unease regarding anal penetration. Thomas encounters a problematic relationship with his boyfriend Geoffrey, who Josh admits looks better with his shirt off than on. He confesses, referring to Geoffrey's musculature, "the muscles made me feel horrible... like I was made out of donuts" (S1Ep4, 18:53).

Once he realises that he is gay, Josh has no issue accepting this aspect of his identity, but he is, nonetheless, reticent to politicise his sexuality. As he tells Geoffrey in one episode, "they've seen me in school musicals. Do we really need a discussion?" (S1E3, 11:09). The show's title, in its fourth season in 2016 and far more popular in the USA than Australia, could be considered as a plea for inclusivity and acceptance but not a polemic. "Josh neither marches the gay-rights flag into viewers' living rooms nor tackles stereotypes by revelling in their polar opposites" (Feeney). Throughout this first season of *Please Like Me*, the actions of its protagonist demonstrate what Dennis Altman surmised in his influential work *Homosexual: Oppression & Liberation*, that is, the ultimate aim of gay liberation was not to liberate the oppressed and subordinated homosexual but rather to dissolve sexual boundaries altogether.

Since Altman's publication in 1971, more contemporary research argues that a male global gay identity can be located, even though for many this category is a contentious one (Sutton 51). In the absence of any precedents in Australian television, Josh Thomas, as the first ongoing major gay character in an Australian television program, being played by a gay man, can be compared to Mr Humphries, played by John Inman in *Are You Being Served?* (1972-1985).[76] The latter may have been the first recurring major gay

[76] Joe Hasham, played the first gay character on Australian television, Don Finlayson in *No 96* (1972-1975). He reprised the role of the gay lawyer, in the 1973 film adaptation of *No 96*, where he has very little to do other than disentangle the problems of his fellow residents in the iconic Paddington apartment block. In

character on television in the English-speaking world but his effeminacy, and flamboyancy established him into a subordinated figure of pathos. The character reinforced the supremacy of hegemonic values by subliminally asking the audience to fear the effeminacy embodied by Mr Humphries who was forever 'free'. Contrastingly, Josh Thomas does not abstain from sex, as did Mr Humphries and this uncompromising decision to present a character in all his complexity, and human foibles, demonstrates the agency of subordinated masculinities. Josh, and other young gay men in the show like Geoffrey, are, typical of their generation and culture, as explored through language, fashion, ease with the social media, interests and so forth. This lack of otherness is what is significant here in the confluence of masculinities. If, momentarily excusing Thomas' vocal peculiarities, the audience is unable to distinguish between men of different standing within the hegemonic framework of masculinities, as is the case between flatmates Tom and Josh in *Please Like Me*, then this can call into question the incorporation of subordinated masculinities into a more equal gender order. Such a way of thinking can be ascribed to Feeney, who writing for *The Atlantic*, contests that the show, "provides a welcome alternative to other shows featuring gay male characters by treating its protagonist not as a token or as a comment on stereotypes, but as a dude who happens to be into other dudes" (par. 2). Finally, it is difficult to conclusively argue whether *Please Like Me* presents a real challenge to the hegemonic order by subsuming subordinated masculinities into its masculinity fold through its assimilationist and inclusive impulses. Certainly, "such questions still warrant asking" as interpolated by Dion Kagan ("Millennial Gay" 35).

The final example of how subordinated and hegemonic masculinities are positioned

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his manner, the character conforms to the cinematic trope of the gay character, being in the service of others.

within a continuum, concerns the *The Slap* adaptation intertexts. Richie, the nominal gay character, represents the obstacles confronted by self-identified gay men in constructing an authentic identity and as, Thomas Bonnici suggests, embodies "the anguish of being oneself in a hegemonic heterosexual environment" (122). Richie, played by Blake Davis, imagines himself to be the victim of homophobia, especially in his interactions with his father and ethnic school friends, because he is not familiar with positive non-heteronormative enactments of masculinity.

Even though Richie's father, Craig, is only a marginal character, his role is significant for he attempts, in vain, to initiate Richie into a traditional mould of masculinity, associated with football, alcohol, gambling, philandering carnality, homophobia and racism. Richie remarks "if he ended up like him he would off himself" (*The Slap* 428). Richie's privileged positioning as the novel's last narrator, and possibly the herald of a new dawn in Australian inclusive society, is undermined, somewhat, in the hypertext by the presentation of Richie as Hector's relentless stalker. This significant change in the adaptation process is unfortunate because it harks back to the pathologisation of homosexuality. But, at least, the homosexual characters in the works of Tsiolkas, like Richie, are no longer living furtively in the shadows and on the periphery of Australian society but now assume a central role in a new inclusive society. They "are now inside, looking out", asserts Jeremy Fisher (7). Richie's narrative is the most conventional and optimistic one, despite his ill-judged suicide attempt. Following this, his mum reassures Richie, "you'll fall in love with other men and many men will fall in love with you." (*The Slap* 468). Unlike his ebullient friend, Connie, who has a crush on a man twice her age, Richie finds a connection with a young man his own age and in his own friendship clique, "he was about to take the joint when, there, in the dark, Lenin kissed him… it

tasted of all the longing and fear and desire he was feeling" (*The Slap* 481). In this way, the conventional romance trope is appropriated for the gay boy and thereby, as suggested by Mandy Treagus, the adaptation intertexts, through subversion, disrupt the dominance of heteronormativity (7). Such an instance, as described above, is rare in Australian screen adaptations, but telling, nonetheless, in demonstrating how a shift has taken place in the way gay men are configured within the national narrative over recent times.

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This chapter has argued that the subordination of gay men constitutes the clearest example of how the relational framework of hegemonic masculinity operates by oppressing, demonising and actively persecuting men on account of their sexual orientation. Even though this is beyond the scope of this work, I have hoped to at least flag how the identity of a gay man in western societies, manifests itself on a global level, largely as a result of the impossibility of gaining acceptance, or even recognition at the regional level. The proposed "Turing Law" considered by the Theresa May British Government (Cowburn) and the formal apology to gay men, delivered in Parliament by the Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews (Meares), are both signs of amelioration of the historical demonisation and persecution of gay men. As evidenced by the screen adaptations examined in this chapter, gay men in Australia had to either shroud their very presence/existence, or when prevailing circumstances allowed it, found it difficult to enact a masculinity which was perceived as average and normative. As a result, gay men have been viewed outside the desirable working-class tier in Australian society which is considered authentic (Skeggs 971), legitimising (Beasley *Rethinking* 94) and hegemonic (Whitman 52).

Chapter 7

Marginalised masculinities and the 'impossible' Aboriginal man.

This chapter will interrogate the marginalisation of Aboriginal male characters within a hegemonic framework and trace how a narrative of Australian identity is grounded on 'white' male heteronormativity. This marginalisation, an example of cultural supremacy, is routinely used to justify the usurpation of the land and the emasculation and relegation of Aboriginal men to the status of the 'other'. Both impulses, ironically, result in a reiteration of a sense of belonging for white Australians. Clare Bradford observes that most representations of Aboriginal men in Australian screen adaptations between 1975 and 2015 arise through the perspectives of white characters ("Regimes of Knowledge" 298), so whether consciously or not, the masculinity contained within such representations is discursively connected with the notion of otherness. For Peta Stephenson, demonising and marginalising Aboriginal men conveniently justifies taking their land and their women from them, and "keeping it for the Europeans" (9).

In the enactment of masculinities, particularly in the active contestation of hegemonic status and the patriarchal dividend contained therein, Aboriginal men have been marginalised and identified as the other, forever acquiescing to the control and power of the European colonisers as Raewyn Connell concludes (*The Men* 62).[77] This view is reinforced by Chris Hallinan and Barry Judd who comment on the nature of Aboriginal identity since colonisation:

> as the nineteenth century progressed, the inferior position of the Aborigine became cemented in the collective psyche of Anglo-Australia as the work of

[77] Even though other people, other than Europeans and Aborigines lived in colonial Australia.

> social Darwinists, anatomists, phrenologists, amateur ethnographers and later physical anthropologists and psychologists confirmed as 'scientific fact' their racial and culture deficit (2364).

Such a view of Aboriginal people has since been discredited scientifically but notwithstanding has retained some cultural currency.

Between 1975 and 2015, Aboriginal characters have featured in 14% of Australian screen adaptations, sometimes in very minor roles, such as in the television program *Devil's Dust*. Peter Krauz, writing in 2003, states "over 1,000 feature films have been produced in Australia, yet I could only identify around fifty films that represent Aborigines in any way at all within the narrative" (90). Given the paucity of representation of Aboriginal people in adaptation texts, as well as the relatively recent nature of masculinity studies, it is not surprisingly that "there has been little analysis of the hierarchies of Indigenous masculinity" (Rutherford L. 64). What is argued in this section of the thesis is that Aboriginal men tend to be represented in a homogeneous manner within the dual discourses of infantilisation and vanquishment that have been discernible tropes in Australian literature since the nineteenth century. These discourses combine to produce their own limited and limiting stereotypical representations of Aboriginal men that enact the very marginalisation that prevents them from enjoying the power and status associated with more exemplary masculinities. More importantly, the discourses of infantilisation and vanquishment preclude Aboriginal men from contesting the valorised identity of the working-class battler that is so potent in Australian culture and society. This is somewhat ironic because the working-class battler archetype has its roots in the mythopoetic Outback, which is where most Aboriginal characters, explored in this chapter, live.

Such limiting representations of Aboriginal men in screen adaptations are typically communicated in racist, negative, and stereotypical terms which are associated, according to Marcia Langton, with the "viewer's ideological framework" and not based on reality (*Well, I Heard it* 24). Moreover, Katherine Biber argues that the representation of Aboriginal men is troubling because the type of Australian masculinity they embody, and hence communicate to audiences, does not have its origins in the bush bloke, nor in its later incarnation, the digger. As such, Aboriginal men are 'impossible men' (228) who do not fulfil the requirements of masculinity as it is articulated in the bush legend and depicted in commercially successful adaptations such as *The Man from Snowy River*. This is ironic because in many adaptations, such as *We of the Never Never*, Aboriginal people are associated with the bush and yet masculine bush types are always white, not black, unless they are menacing, as demonstrated in *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith* (1978). More than this, Aboriginal men can be perceived as doubly impossible because they contest the bush bloke for the land. In cinema, this contestation is often avoided by placing Aboriginality on a narrative trajectory that culminates in death for men such as Marbuk in *Jedda* (1955), Tony in *Dead Heart* (1996), Floyd in *Blackfellas* (1996), Dumby Red in *Australian Rules*, Magarri in *Australia*, Jimmie in *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith*, Whisker Harry in *The Secret River* (2015), Cameron Doomadgee in *The Tall Man* (2011), and 'Two Bob' King in *Gallipoli* (2015). Through the death of so many male Aboriginal characters, Biber argues, Australian adaptations erase any promise of possibility of a positive representation for these men and thus they "cease to be imagined in our national stories" (30–31).

Since the colonisation of Australia from 1788 and the usurpation of Aboriginal lands, the colonising population has marginalised and denigrated local Aboriginal populations

culturally, and often physically, in order to emphasise their own entitlement. The way the Aboriginal body, both male and female, was perceived by the European colonists is also significant here, for it too was denigrated and demonised. Insults about Aboriginal male bodies abound in screen adaptations between 1975-2015 as so too is the use of derogatory terms about Aboriginal cultures. The language of marginalisation of Aboriginal men has resulted mostly in two archetypes in their representation: first, that of inferior victim who is incapable of contesting a more exemplary form of masculinity, which would place him on an equal footing with the European settlers, and second, that of a preternatural guide, whose function is to only serve the more powerful males and thereby continue the perpetuation of their own marginalisation. A range of manifestations of marginalised otherness exist within these two broad categories and are employed to further the interest of non-Aboriginal Australians (Varela Rodríguez 9) and will be explored in more detail, further in this chapter.

Connell identifies this limited and limiting representation of Aboriginal men as part of the colonial impulse. She writes,

> empire marks a decisive historical change in the social embodiment of masculinities. Under imperialism men's bodies are shifted around the world, trained and controlled in new ways, sorted and symbolised on different principles (*The Men* 62).

Despite the marked heterogeneity that formerly existed among the multiple Aboriginal nations in Australia, the marginalisation of Aboriginal people and their designation as the 'other' has established, according to Suneeti Rekhari, firstly, an Aboriginal masculinity as a national racial object and secondly as a gendered object (126). The perpetuation of

Aboriginal representations of masculinity within such narrow and condescending stereotypes and terms is seen by Catriona Moore and Stephen Muecke as evidence of a racist impulse within Australian society that can influence even the most socially progressive directors such as Bruce Beresford in *The Fringe Dwellers* (1986) (37).

In the interplay between hegemonic and marginalised masculinities, Aboriginal men are disadvantaged by their representation as one-dimensional characters. As proposed earlier, they are depicted within the discourse of infantilisation or vanquishment. The discourse of infantilisation reduces Aboriginal men to the condescending status of a child-like demeanour seen invariably as, irrational (Pretty in *Australian Rules*), psychotic (the titular character in *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith*), indolent (Joe in *The Fringe Dwellers*), felonious (Floyd in *Blackfellas*), and loutish (Tilly in *Last Cab to Darwin*). The discourse of vanquishment highlights the 'otherness' ascribed to Aboriginal men as a sign of a vanishing race, communicated through the persona of the primitive (Mr Ed in *Tracks*), the noble savage (Black Boy in *Walkabout*), the mystic (Poppy in *Dead Heart*), and the preternatural guide (King George in *Australia*). This static representation of Aboriginal men allows, as Varela Rodríguez argues, the more privileged white character to position and extol himself as the "logical, civilised and advanced Australian" (19). It also allows the privileged colonizer, in this case the hegemonic whites, to view the Aboriginal male as a unified homogeneous persona, which, according to Edward Said in *Orientalism* (1977), makes it easier to manipulate and exploit Aboriginal men on a number of levels (12).

The construction of 'otherness' in the marginalisation of Aboriginal men

The representation of Aboriginal men as manifestations of 'the other' is inseparable from

the patriarchal ethnocentric discourses that have continually marginalised Australia's indigenous peoples. This marginalisation and oppression of Aboriginal men has been orchestrated by both violent and cultural means as part of an imperialist supremacist ideology. Notably, Derek Stanovsky cautions that any discussion of the process of representation of Aboriginal men on film cannot be divorced from a paradigm of postcolonial masculinities. He notes:

> First World discourses about Third World masculinities often produce and maintain representations that serve to create, perpetuate and reinforce First World norms of masculinity and heterosexuality by way of the boundaries and contrasts provided by these "Other" Third World masculinities and sexualities (496).

Dave Palmer and Garry Gillard write about the paradox existing between representing Aboriginal men as the barbaric and parasitical other whilst considering them as central to the myth of hegemonic white identity (100). It could be argued that the main challenge to the marginalised status occupied by Aboriginal men within a hegemonic framework did not occur until the historic Mabo decision of 1992. This decision, which took place nearly two centuries after colonial rule was first introduced, was a unique opportunity according to Mick Dodson, to "begin to right an historic wrong, namely, the brutal and devastating dispossession and destruction of the first peoples of this land" (xvii). The Mabo decision went further than recognising land rights for Aboriginal people and advocated the cultural imprimatur of Aborigines, hoping that this would address issues of marginalisation and economic disadvantage. Only the adaptation of *The Sapphires*, however, and to a lesser extent Luhrmann's *Australia*, affords a contextualisation of the struggles of Australian Aboriginal people within a global context of Indigenous self-

determination. All other adaptations present their Aboriginal characters within the context of assimilation, privileging White Australians, under the guise of progress and modernity. As Dodson, reflects, "the law may have shifted but the colonial mindset has not" (xix).

Australian film adaptations nearly all utilise a naturalistic mode in the process of representation. A naturalist approach is even located at the core of the escapist fantasies such as *Crocodile Dundee* and *Red Dog*, or set genre pieces such as *Bran Nue Dae* (2009), *Mad Max: Fury Road* and *The Sapphires*. By establishing a binary representation of masculinities in screen texts between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal men that privileges the latter in terms of power and control, Benedict Anderson claims screen texts contribute to the myth of the vanishing race (5). Francesca Merlan also observes that Aboriginal men have been positioned as objects of the white gaze (108) which might account for their stereotypical representation as either marginalised victims or moral custodians of the land.

Representations of Aboriginal men as the moral custodians of the land is another way in which they are identified as the 'other.' Shane Crilly contests that non-Indigenous Australians have treated Aborigines as an inevitable feature of the landscape, functioning mostly as part of an 'exotic' backdrop for white characters struggling with their own concerns ("Reading Aboriginalities" 37). This conflation of the natural world with Aboriginality functions as an example of otherness and is the polar opposite of modernity, particularly when the Aboriginal man represented as the custodian of the land as dictated by his individual Dreaming, inadvertently locates and represents the Aboriginal man within the 'noble savage' archetype. This can be illustrated in the way that Aboriginality is positioned as subordinate in contrast to the civilising influence of

European colonial and postcolonial rule in adaptations released prior to the Mabo decision of 1992. Films such *The Timeless Land* (1980), *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith,* and *Storm Boy* (1976) are just three examples illustrating this. Karen Jennings argues that in such texts "Aboriginal culture is invested with meaning only in relation to European culture", with Aboriginality merely operating "as a signifier of essential difference" (18). Thus, such representations of Aboriginality do little to contest the right of hegemonic masculinity, as invested in the representation of the white colonial settler and his descendants to rule. It also allows him to continue his exploitation of the energy, knowledge, and hard work of the marginalised Aboriginal man.

In most screen adaptations, the land functions as a character in its own right and drives the narrative choices made by Aboriginal men. Pauline Clague supports this by noting that "country… acts as a force that propels the character to another level" (56). The *Dead Heart* intertexts present landscape as a malevolent force, impenetrable to non-Indigenous Australians who view it as threatening and inhospitable. This landscape is the 'dead heart' denoted in the title, whereas for Aboriginal people this same entity is the heart of Dreaming. Romaine Moreton adds, "Indigenous people acknowledge that the land is alive, an entity and a being that deserves respect" (ASO *5 Seasons*). Interestingly in *Dead Heart*, the members of the white community include representatives of progressive and civilised society under the auspices of the law, science, and education. Collectively, police officer Larkin, anthropologist Charlie, and school teacher Les forge a type of hegemonic masculinity which is, nonetheless, rendered ineffective against the manipulations and interventions of the marginalised masculinity as enacted by Poppy, the local magic man. This challenge to hegemonic masculinity embodied by the Aboriginal character which was central to the Nick Parsons play dissipates in the film adaptation because the

sympathies of the audience tend to align in favour of the white characters. This is because Aboriginality has become synonymous with the fear of the majestic but hostile landscape in the imagined Australian psyche. Ross Gibson supports this notion claiming that landscape in Australian cinema is transformed into a "projective screen for a persistent national neurosis deriving from the fear and fascination of the preternatural continent" (69).

Even the inability of an Aboriginal character, played by Ernie Dingo in *Dead Heart,* to survive in the Bush reinforces the negative notion of the land as uncivilised and threatening, a permutation of a *terra nullius*. The presumption that land in Australia was unoccupied space has been a major source of divergence between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians. British colonisers and explorers believed the land could be legitimately claimed since it was so sparsely populated and people did not cultivate or transform the land (Woolf 26). The appropriation of the land and the imposition of British institutions onto the lives of Aboriginal Australians has led to historical tensions and a culture of exclusion in attempts to communicate a national story. As such, Aboriginal Australians became marginalised and peripheral in the hegemonic narration of a White Australia as shown in the intertexts of *Manganinnie* (1980) and *Walkabout* (1971) (Moran 134). Aboriginal exclusion from the documentation of Federation in 1901 entrenched the status of Aboriginal Australians as ostracised, undesirable, and peripheral entities from the imagined white homogeneous nation (Moran 140). The intertexts of *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith* both highlight and debunk the myth that there was no resistance from the Indigenous population towards the colonizing oppressors. Other adaptations also explicate how different Aboriginal populations have been rendered invisible in their own land. *We of the Never Never* perpetuates the myth of hard-working

indigenous Australians who are voluntarily complicit in the colonial discourse of settlement (Moran 180) – a discourse which is based on the archetype of the noble savage. Kevin Williams argues that the perception of the bush as hostile and uncivilised justified the settlement of the land at the expense of its original inhabitants (44). At the conclusion of *Dead Heart*, all of the white characters realise the impossibility of reconciliation and decide to flee to the city whilst the Aboriginal elder, Poppy, escapes in the Toyota driving into the dusty Outback, a metonym of civilisation and progress.

As argued earlier in this work, homosociality is a pervasive construct in the enactment of masculinity in Australian screen adaptations and it is also ubiquitous in adaptations dealing with Aboriginal men where the communal male homosocial experience is privileged over individual experiences. Hence, individualism is almost expunged from Aboriginal society, as presented in screen adaptations such as *Blackfellas*, *Australian Rules,* and *The Fringe Dwellers*, all of which present men living in complicated relations of kinship alongside other men. Blacky's interactions with Dumby in *Australian Rules* are invigilated by a band of mostly silent fellow Aboriginal youths from the Mission. Their function as a protective guard is only made apparent for the viewer at Dumby's funeral, where they attempt to stop the intrusion of white Blacky, before the grieving father countermands this. In *The Fringe Dwellers*, the hapless father Joe Comeaway makes all his decisions communally with his mates and his brother Charlie. This is shown to have disastrous results for his family, as illustrated by the decision to spend the rent money in a card game. Jennings argues that Australian adaptations such as *The Fringe Dwellers* typically mythologise Aboriginality by following Hollywood tropes regarding the plight of the individual in an adversarial context (18). *Blackfellas* also illustrates that for Aboriginal men, socialising, and even flirting, is carried out in the presence of other men. But more

significantly the term 'brother', used to denote the close bonds between Aboriginal men of the same family/mob, is used in abundance and forms part of the tragic dénouement in *Blackfellas* which sees the rudderless Floyd die in martyrdom to save his 'brother' Doug. The closeness between men as brothers is understood by Aboriginal men as being more exemplary than the more mainstream term of mateship.

Examining the interplay between hegemonic masculinities, routinely aligned to white Australians and marginalised masculinities, as delegated to Aboriginal men, is fruitful for audiences because, as Felicity Collins and Therese Davis propose, it "tells us what it feels like to be living in the 'afterwardness' of colonialism during a moment of intense globalisation" (8). What it reveals in reference to the Australian adaptations scrutinised in this section, is the "centrality of relationships between people and country, and the pervasiveness of the sacred" (Bradford "Regimes of Knowledge" 202) as well as the indisputable challenge to hegemonic relations that is a feature of post-Mabo adaptations, particularly ones which embrace a deliberate reconciliation political discourse. This is most clear in Baz Luhrmann's *Australia*, a film which Langton argues "provides an alternative history from the one John Howard and his followers constructed" ("Faraway" par. 10). The triumvirate of hegemonic white Anglo-Celtic masculinity, represented by The Drover, King Carney and Fletcher is initially juxtaposed to the triumvirate of Aboriginal marginalised masculinity, represented by Nullah, Magarri, and King George; and by the last frame of Luhrmann's text, power rests with the 'othered' hybrid characters of the Drover and Nullah. So in fact, this dénouement of the film explicates the flattening of competing masculinities which in itself constitutes a challenge to the power of hegemonic masculinities to continue their tenet, particularly in post-Mabo Australia.

Stereotypical representations of Aboriginal youth within the discourse of infantilisation.

The discourse of infantilisation continues to be a discernible trope in Australian screen adaptations, producing its own limited and limiting stereotypical representations of younger Aboriginal men. Such representations include those of the battler, the rebel, the foil, and the trickster, all of which are positioned outside the realm of responsible maturity, traditionally a state of being associated with being an adult man. This, of course, is very much a western socio-cultural construct, whereas across large parts of Aboriginal Australia, the transition from youth to manhood was marked by initiation ceremonies. The representations of the battler, the rebel, the foil, and the trickster are utilised in a host of adaptations to highlight the interplay between the marginalised status occupied by Aboriginal youths and the more powerful enactments of masculinity which are often denied to them.

The figure of the young Aboriginal man as a battler first appears in *The Harp in the South*. Both the novel (1948) and its screen adaptation (1986), are optimistic about the feasibility of a harmonious interracial existence in Australia as encapsulated in the marriage of Rowena Darcy and Charlie, a working-class 'idealised' young man who is a member of the Stolen Generations. Charlie works at a printing-press and his ordinariness is highlighted in the intertexts as part of the depiction of him as an archetypal battler. Charlie is the epitome of an idealised Australian masculinity as demonstrated by his loyalty, diligence, attractiveness, and laconic nature. One significant difference between the novel and its screen adaptation concerns Charlie's familial circumstances. In the novel, his mixed descent is only briefly mentioned and his removal from his family remains mysterious, while in the television adaptation Charlie clearly identifies himself as

a member of the Stolen Generations. Charlie's Aboriginality is handled sensitively considering that the novel was written in the era of the White Australia policy. In the novel, using language consistent with the era but now considered offensive, Mumma admits she has hesitations about Charlie's suitability as husband for Rowena, "because there's nigger in him, Hughie. I'm scared of it" (Park 168), and has visions of her husband, out on the veranda nursing a "sooty grandchild" (Park 168). In the adaptation, no such qualms exist for Rowena or her father, Hugh, who proudly and defiantly defends Charlie's Aboriginality using the same words as he does in the novel, "It's [Charlie's blood] real Australian and no matter how bad that is, there's none better." (Park 168).

Despite the sympathetic portrayal of Charlie, he nevertheless remains a marginalised character who ironically must rely on the approval of Hughie Darcy for his happiness and whose narrative function is to serve the interests of the white protagonists. Such a narrative function aligns closely with Gramsci's original conceptualisation of hegemony. Similarly, *Australian Rules*, adapted from both *Deadly, Unna?* and its sequel *Nukkin Ya* represents the rebellious, exuberant and talented Aboriginal teenager, Dumby Red, portrayed by Luke Carroll, as the catalyst for the self-actualisation of the text's protagonist, the non-Aboriginal Jack 'Blacky' Black. Red lives in a mission as part of a segregated world of a South Australian coastal town which only interacts, as a united community, to play football. Red's football prowess is lovingly captured by Mandy Walker's cinematography and the audience anticipates Red's win for 'Best on the Ground' during the upcoming grand final. A football city scout has already stipulated that this win will be vital in gaining Red a contract with a city football club, which will become his means of escaping the bleak and prejudiced world of Prospect Bay. The

point of view privileged in the adaptation intertexts is highlighted in the film not only by the narrative arc but also by Black's voice-over narration at the commencement of the film. Motivated by racial prejudice, the medal is awarded to the son of the white coach. A series of complications ensue that result in the death of Red, thereby at once transforming his character from rebel to victim. Anna Dzenis informs the reader that the film was commissioned as a reconciliation text, "by the Adelaide Festival 2002 in collaboration with SBS Independent" (33). Accordingly, the character who reaches a degree of self-knowledge and realises that his perception of the world is different from what he had believed in previously, is the white young protagonist through his genuine but tragic friendship with Red. Even in death, the Aboriginal young man continues to act as a foil for the white protagonist.

Fig. 39. A screen shot from *Australian Rules* (1:24:58). Black is the only non-Aboriginal man present at Red's funeral. Attending his funeral, according to Anita Jetnikof, "represents a betrayal of familial solidarity in the eyes of Black's father" (38).

As part of the infantilisation discourse, young Aboriginal men are deprived of the positive modelling of responsible masculinity by fathers who can facilitate their maturation process. The absence of male elders makes it virtually impossible for youths to become men in an Aboriginal sense as they cannot undergo the necessary initiation process. This is illustrated negatively in *Blackfellas* but more optimistically in *Last Cab to Darwin* (2015). In the former adaptation, Dougie's father escapes from prison and pleads with his son to steal a car for him. The film also illustrates how the absence of responsible older men as mentors necessitates the need for young Aboriginal men like Doug Dooligan to assume responsibility for their Dreaming and consequently become responsible custodians of the land and their cultural traditions. Routinely, throughout the adaptation intertexts, Dooligan is told by white characters, including his white mother and the local police officers, to "grow up", but in a cultural context he cannot do that without participating in an Aboriginal initiation ceremony. His developing maturity manifests itself as he tries to connect more meaningfully with his Aboriginality and is juxtaposed with the actions of his cousin, 'Pretty Boy' Floyd. The latter's enactment of masculinity is an incarnation of immature behaviour. Dooligan's trajectory as a character is seen positively given that its hypotext, the novel *The Day of the Dog* (1981), was released twelve years before the historical Mabo decision.

The marginalisation of young men as a result of absent fathers is also explored in the 2015 film adaptation of the Reg Cribb play, *Last Cab to Darwin*. Here the role of the marginalised trickster is more recognisable as the roguish and charming Aboriginal larrikin, a depiction that has long been established as a trope in Australian screen adaptations. Tilly, as played by Mark Coles Smith, communicates the chaotic energy of young masculine excess, at once exuberant and dangerous. This is realised by certain

extreme changes in Tilly's characterisation in the play and the film adaptation. In the hypertext, Tilly is no longer the mysterious family-man who is trying to return to his wife and four children in Oodnadatta but is instead more aimless, less emotionally stable, more mischievous, and certainly more self-destructive as a result of his dependence on alcohol; Tilly becomes "a recognisable type among young Indigenous men" (McDonald J. par. 11).

The Cribb play identifies Tilly as a "young Aboriginal fella" (54) who only appears in Scene 10, one of the play's twenty scenes, but who is alluded to by the protagonist, Rex (called Max in the original play), during a hallucinatory episode in Scene 18 in which the dying man asks for his guidance, "how do I get back to the main road?" (90). In the play, Tilly is stranded on the road after his dilapidated car breaks down but in the adaptation

Fig. 40. The first appearance of Tilly, played by Mark Coles Smith in the 2015 film, *Last Cab to Darwin*. The part of Tilly has been expanded considerably in the film adaptation endowing him with complexity and transforming his narrative function.

he is an adept mechanic who repairs Rex's shattered windscreen, thereby facilitating the latter's journey to Darwin. [78] Tilly repeats the line, "that's the worst white-fella music ever recorded to torment a blackfella" that was previously uttered by Rex's Aboriginal lover, Polly, in the script (Cribb 56). Subsequently this allusion is pivotal in prompting Rex to adopt a more parental role in his relationships with Tilly. Tilly's motivation also differs significantly in the intertexts. In the play, Tilly's faltering football career is attributed to the irresponsibility and apathy shown by his community members, "no bastard turned up to training. Can't get the young fellas to focus anymore" (Cribb 57), whereas in the film, Tilly's lack of progress as a footballer is explained by his battle with his own demons, including a battle with alcohol. Again this change in the hypertext fits better with the discourse of infantilisation used to portray young Aboriginal men because the character of Tilly is no longer a responsible family man, who provided guidance to the travelling protagonist, Rex as he was in the Cribb play. Despite this, Greg Dolgopolov suggests "it is the energy and volatility of Coles Smith as 'the trickster' that provide the impetus for Rex to realise the importance of living" ("Odyssey" 73). Whilst socially and economically Tilly remains very much a marginalised character, Tilly and Rex are presented as equals who develop a meaningful bond based on mutual understanding, respect and acknowledgment of each other's fears, foibles, and challenges. Both men, black and white, save each other on more than one occasion in the film's narrative and the camaraderie between the two men is an encouraging sign in the diminution of marginalisation in the representation of Aboriginal men and also in the levelling of the hegemonic masculinity framework.

[78] Michael Caton's portrayal of Rex is significant because of the actor's reputation for portraying the noble battler, Daryl Kerrigan in *The Castle*.

The paucity of the heroic Aboriginal man

The portrayal of Aboriginal men as heroic figures would indeed constitute a challenge to hegemonic masculinities but this form of representation is rare in the screen adaptations examined. This contrasts with the representation of heroic masculinity in other feature films such as *Ten Canoes* (2006) and *Yolngu Boy* (2001), written directly for the screen, and with the cooperation of Aboriginal people. As demonstrated in the adaptations of *Australian Rules* and *Last Cab to Darwin*, heroic masculinities for Aboriginal men often assume the guise of sporting prowess. Laurence Bamblett writes that "Aboriginal sporting success… has given Aborigines more uplift, more collective pride, more kudos than any other single activity" (25). Tilly's football prowess in *Last Cab to Darwin*, and to a lesser extent Dumby's efforts in *Australian Rules*, can be described as "mesmeric, instinctive, naturally talented, magical and having breath-taking flair, and a different sense of space and time" (Hallinan, Bruce and Coram 372). The representation of the Aboriginal man as an exemplary footballer needs to be seen within a conciliatory impulse context. As Maurice Berger observes "the performance of masculinity is always a collective process in any social group" (12) which can partly explain the popularity of football amongst Aboriginal men as well as their ability to excel at the game. The latter is so prolific in screen adaptations such as *Australian Rules* and *Last Cab to Darwin* but in other screen texts too, such as *Yolngu Boy*, that it has become a trope. Francis McCoy even suggests that the elements involved in the game resemble those of the rites of passage and customary ceremonies; "gatherings for football, like those at ceremonial time, can involve large groups of men preparing and then travelling long distances to other communities. Both football and the Law are highly valued expressions of male sociality" (160).

Away from the football field, heroic masculinity for Aboriginal men has been presented in the post-Mabo era of Australian screen history as a reworking of old myths, reconfiguring the contribution of Aboriginal Australian men. The two adaptations that achieve this, most demonstrably, *Australia* and *Mabo* (2012)*,* are both screen texts whose status as adaptations could be disputed by certain scholars because they operate as analogies and not merely as faithful transpositions (Wagner 227). *Mabo,* directed by Rachel Perkins, and broadcast on the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation* in 2012 as a way of honouring the twentieth anniversary of the Mabo decision, was adapted from the documentary *First Australians* (2008), also directed by Perkins. Archival court records, political leaders' comments, authentic news footage, the nonfictional book *Edward Koiki Mabo: His Life and Struggle for Land Rights* by Noel Loos (1996), as well as personal anecdotes from the Mabo family were all used as sources for this television adaptation. The Mabo decision of 1992 was a "landmark development of Australian national life… a seismic shift in Australians' sense of what their nation and its relationship to Indigenous peoples is and has historically been" (Birns and McNeer 9).

Eddie Mabo, despite the dearth of resources available to him, decided to undertake the heroic act of addressing the greatest injustice in Australian history which was the presumption that the land was underutilised, essentially vacant and could therefore legally be usurped by the British. The seemingly ordinary nature of Mabo is what allows audiences to see him as a heroic figure and catapults the film into a 'David and Goliath' narrative. As Mabo tells his wife in the film, "people like us, we can't afford to be troublemakers" (29:45). The achievement of *Mabo* is located within the refusal of the eponymous character to accept his marginalisation in society and his decision to contest the power and entitlement of hegemonic masculinity, as represented in the film by

representatives of Government and the law. By featuring an Indigenous man whose initiatives drive the narrative of the text, and who is no longer a passive alienated victim occupying the margins of white society, the film provides a concrete enactment of the agency of marginalised masculinities. Or, as Dolgopov observes, rather than "being victims of circumstances, [people such as Mabo] vigorously engage with their situation" (82). This appears congruent with the director's intention which was to cinematically show the transformation of an ordinary man into an iconic Australian hero.

The merging of several myths and histories belonging to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians is also evident in Luhrmann's *Australia* and is flagged by the portentous title of the text; a fantasy of reconciliation, as Belinda Smaill, amongst others, proposes (97). In *Australia*, the character of Magarri subscribes to the Outback myth of autonomous masculinity alongside the white character of The Drover. Even though the two men respectfully see other as equals, the historical/cultural contest examined in the film situates Magarri in a marginalised position, evident by the entrenched institutional segregation that Magarri confronts. Magarri is presented as an equal to The Drover, as noted by the use of the word "brother" (09:03). The masculinity enacted by the two men is complementary and never antagonistic. The Drover may be the more expert skilled bushman but Magarri occupies the higher moral ground, demonstrated in his chastising of The Drover's behaviour as well as by his heroic sacrifice to enable the reconciliation process to take place. He tells his friend, "you gotta drove this mob home, Drover" (2:16:05). In this manner, Magarri is "the moral centre of the film and the instigator of change" in Luhrmann's *Australia* (Mortimer 94). His sacrifice can be seen as part of the national search for a postcolonial identity that recognises the contributions of Aboriginal Australians that have hitherto, been routinely expunged from the national imagination.

Pam Cook recognises this, claiming that *Australia* attempts, through the epic form, to represent "the nation's vicissitudes of the country's colonial past in the global arena" (132).

Aboriginal Invisibility, Whitewashing and Appropriation

Aboriginal invisibility is not restricted to screen texts. Kathleen Steele observes that "by the late 1890s Aborigines all but disappeared from literature" (36). Where Aboriginal male characters are included in screen adaptations, their role and function is habitually peripheral, often clichéd, and without the complexity and nuance afforded to other non-Aboriginal characters. Furthermore, due to the sub-hegemonic positioning of Aboriginal males within texts, a certain homogeneity arises in their representation, often occupying identifiable categories. Stereotypes of Aboriginal men still prevail in the screen

Fig. 41. The death of Magarri knowingly references the death of Archy Hamilton, the iconic young character from Peter Weir's *Gallipoli*, whose sacrifice has become synonymous with Australian exemplary masculinity (2:17:27).

adaptations examined in this work, and those stereotypes serve to reify 'the superiority' of the non-Aboriginal population of Australia.

The appropriation of Aboriginal identity by non-Aboriginal Australian men can also be seen as an example of the invisibility that purposefully obfuscates and denigrates Aboriginality. This, in turn, reiterates the imprimatur of the hegemonic framework of masculinity by positioning Aboriginal men on the margins of society and as exotic victims complicit with their powerlessness and peripheral status. The contestation between marginalised and hegemonic masculinities is playfully enacted in *Crocodile Dundee*, where the eponymous hero not only appropriates Aboriginal customs shamefully but fools himself into thinking he has been given permission to do so by Aboriginal people. This prompts Jennings to refer to Dundee as a "cultural poacher" (20). Through the representation of the Aboriginal character of Neville, played by David Gulpilil, as a comical foil who has no affinity with the land and is ignorant of his Dreaming, the film reinforces colonial notions of white superiority by endowing the protagonist with such kinships.[79] The film presents Dundee as an honorary Aboriginal man, able to participate in cultural rites such as attending a corroboree. He is depicted as someone with little political conscience. According to Dundee, Aboriginal custodianship over traditional land is "like two fleas fighting over a dog" (21:00). Ruth Abbey and Jo Crawford point out that diegetic sounds associated with Aboriginality accompany Dundee's performative exalted feats of masculinity and control over natural elements, thereby strengthening his representation as a white Aboriginal man (159). His appropriation of an Aboriginal identity as highlighted throughout the film through his costume is ideologically vexing because audiences, rightly, perceive this as cultural theft. Dundee's 'white' Aboriginality is

[79] Possibly an ironic reference to A. O. Neville, Chief Protector of Aborigines, in Western Australia.

also reinforced through his mêlée with the creature that shares his name, which is a deliberate echo of the battle between another crocodile and the Aboriginal character Marbuk in *Jedda* (1955), as observed by Jeanette Hoorn (119). Dundee's clear superiority over Marbuk in battling the creature is particularly disturbing because his usurpation of Aboriginality is naturalised within a hegemonic masculinity framework. Perhaps as Annette Hamilton suggests, such appropriation of Aboriginality can be situated within the "fragile boundaries of Australian culture" (18).

If hegemonic masculinity is rendered stronger through the invisibility of Aboriginality, then whitewashing serves a similar function. Even the term whitewashing contains within it a suggestion of hegemonic primacy, favouring white Australia. As shown explicitly in

Fig. 42. Neville in *Rabbit Proof Fence* (Kenneth Branagh), passionate about his eugenic vision for a White Australia, demonstrates in this screenshot how Aboriginality can be biologically eliminated, during a public lecture, under the auspice of Aboriginal welfare.

Australia and *Rabbit Proof Fence*, mainstream ideology as well as official Government policies in place between the 1930s and WWII, supposed that Aboriginal Australians could be assimilated into the white population by a process of intergenerational biological absorption. In the post-war years, practices shifted to cultural absorption. Fiona Probyn writes that the "concept of whiteness is linked to the genocidal effects and paternalistic rhetoric of government policies regarding Aboriginal people" (61). Marilyn Lake even writes that the white sperm of non-Aboriginal men was considered to act as a "bleaching agent" in this endeavour (383). Liz Conor writes that children like Tocky in *Capricornia* (1938), one of the hypotexts of Luhrmann's film, Molly in *Rabbit Proof Fence*, and Nullah in *Australia* "were the keepsakes of colonialism" (110). The custody of such children, including Kay in *The Sapphires*, is vital in maintaining white hegemonic control over the marginalised Aboriginal population, particularly in the absence of an Aboriginal biological father. *Rabbit Proof Fence* reflects the historical enactment of hegemonic masculinity, embodied by Kenneth Brannagh's portrayal of Neville, a character who insists that the taking of so-called 'half-caste' Aboriginal children is both responsible and moral under the Aboriginal Protection Act of 1905. In representing the State he is acting 'in loco parentis', emboldened by his belief and his delusional paternalism, that he is truly a good father to a host of children. Such beliefs reify the imprimatur of a white colonial paradigm whereas in *Australia*, the director ensures that the future and nurture of Nullah is equally shared between his Aboriginal family, his Dreaming, and his adoptive white parents, marking the film as a reconciliation text. More importantly, the positioning of The Drover as a defender of Aboriginal customs, beliefs, and history whilst celebrating his hegemonic status, constitutes a real challenge in the positioning of marginalised masculinities. This is because his antagonist in the film is not an Aboriginal man but the racist, exploitative, and misogynistic Fletcher, who through criminal and manipulative

means, aspires to the mantle of hegemonic masculinity. The colonial/ imperial gaze over the land, as personified by Fletcher who wants to possess Faraway Downs, is counterbalanced by the symbiotic gaze of The Drover and King George, Nullah's grandfather and Aboriginal 'magic man', both of whom merely wish to protect the land and recognise themselves as transitory beings, in thrall to something greater than themselves (Simpson 2010 90). [80]

Nullah's hybridity of identity may well be axial in mounting a meaningful challenge to the patriarchal dividend entailed in hegemonic masculinity. A further example that could signal the desuetude of hegemonic masculinity can be found in the hyperkinetic adaptation, *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015), the fourth instalment of George Miller's franchise that presents an apocalyptic vision for Australia. Hegemonic masculinity in the film becomes synonymous with whiteness as demonstrated by the acolytes of Immortan Joe, the diseased despot, who enslaves not only women but marginalised and subordinated men too, like his war boys. Hegemonic power here is literally painted on by the subordinated males as a way of expounding allegiance to the ultimate hegemon. In contrast, indigeneity is recalled by an Aboriginal man who haunts Max's dreams demanding to know why "you let us die". The audience is invited to see the film's female protagonist, Furiosa, as an Aboriginal descendant for she admits that not only is she "Stolen" but she also applies black warpaint to signal her opposition to white oppressive masculinity. At the conclusion of the film, Furiosa and her liberated tribe are victorious over the white males which prompts Bonny Cassidy to observe "that history belongs to them" (*The Conversation*) as the final nail in the hegemonic masculinist coffin.

[80] This colonial gaze over the land is scrutinised so effectively in *One Night, the Moon* directed by Rachel Perkins, which was adapted from the documentary *Black Tracker* directed by Michael Riley in 1997. Luhrmann's use of this is a knowing 'homage' to Perkins.

Aboriginal men and victimhood.

Screen adaptations featuring Aboriginal people largely do so through the exploration of social afflictions and ills. Collectively, such adaptations are thereby promoting the notion that Aboriginal identity is a national 'problem' (Rekhari 129). *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith,* directed by Fred Schepisi and adapted from the award-winning novel by Thomas Keneally, was the first big-budget film to present an Aboriginal man as an archetypal victim. Both Keneally and Schepisi are politically sympathetic towards their oppressed but conflicted protagonist, and their representation of the racial issues raised by miscegenation and intercultural relationships is explored with sensitivity in the context of the text's setting, shortly before Federation. The adaptation of *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith* remains influential today because it challenges the myth of peaceful colonial settlement in Australia, particularly the notion that colonisation did not meet any resistance from the original custodians of the land. Further, both intertexts have invited responders to reflect on the types of 'Australianess' that were continually promulgated by the AFC genre films.

The interplay between hegemonic and marginalised masculinity in the intertexts is illustrated through the irreconcilable differences in the performance of masculinity by Reverend Neville, portrayed by Jack Thompson, and that of the titular character. Neville's power as a settler derives from his legally-recognised ownership of the land under Australian law and the indisputable power that various institutions, such as the law and the church, bestow on him. The more marginalised masculinity embodied by Jimmie is shown through the open spaces, particularly in the earlier scenes in the film, that record his initiation into his tribe and the maturation of his adult identity. It is only when the bewildered young man, having being a victim of countless racist encounters, attempts

to impersonate a 'white' identity via land ownership, that things go awry for him, leading to the tragic dénouement. His own brother, Mort, refers to Jimmie as "a devil man" whose attempt to contest white hegemonic power fails disastrously and who in the process also loses any hope of being able to live as an Aboriginal man. Consequently, he is "shunned by both communities" (Rayner 83). Mudrooroo complains that the "film's lingering image was that of a beserk boong hacking to death white ladies" (O'Regan 59). Therefore, despite the best intentions of both Kenneally and Schepisi to represent Jimmie as a victim who deserves the understanding and pity of audiences, this fails to materialise.

Even though the adaptation of the popular novel by Gare, *The Fringe Dwellers*, was considered a breakthrough for Aboriginal representation and visibility, the exploration of Aboriginal masculinity in it, remains problematic. In *The Fringe Dwellers,* this is realised mainly through the representation of the ineffectual father Joe Comeaway, portrayed by Bob Maza, and his brother Charlie, which perpetuates the myth of the Aboriginal male as lazy, irresponsible, addicted to alcohol and gambling, lacking in any sort of refinement and according to Neil Rattigan, "feckless" (135). Furthermore, the circular dénouement of the narrative also reinforces the nomadic lifestyle attributed to Aboriginal people, which at best, is an anachronism from Australia's colonial literature. The failure of the Comeaway family to settle in the house provided for them by the State, and their return to the communal, substandard living arrangements, feeds into the uncultured identity of which their town neighbours accuse them. *The Fringe Dwellers* adaptation intertexts, like those that preceded it, as well as *Rabbit-Proof Fence*, *Blackfellas*, and *Dead Heart* that followed it, highlight the impossibility of assimilation into mainstream society and place the blame for this at the feet of Aboriginal people.

Harry Blagg notes that for many young Aboriginal men "entry into the drink culture has become part of the rites of passage to adulthood" (17) which leads into violence, familial and communal harm and the status of victimhood. Sadly, such new destructive ceremonies have replaced traditional ceremonies and are a result of the legacy of colonisation and how this has disrupted and distorted entrenched Aboriginal cultural practices. Floyd in *Blackfellas* is another example of a rudderless victim who remains marginalised and locked out of the patriarchal dividend. Despite his geniality, his lack of education and skills prevent him from contesting a more rewarding station within society, as does the belligerent racial prejudice embodied by the white police officers, who represent the privileged masculinity in this text. Floyd realises the futility of his situation and his heroic death at the conclusion of the film is at least an attempt to save Dougie, his childhood friend whom he calls "brother" throughout. By doing so he becomes "free as a fuckin' bird" (Mortimer 93).

Tony Krawitz's documentary, adapted from the critically-acclaimed nonfictional book by Chloe Hooper (2008) also entitled *The Tall Man*, provides an additional and telling example of how Aboriginal men are depicted as victims in screen adaptations and how this status arises through a contestation of power between marginalised and other more powerful performances of masculinity. In the adaptation intertexts, Cameron Doomadgee, arrested for public drunkenness and swearing at police before being found dead in a police cell, is positioned as the archetypal victim. Such positioning as a victim is realised within the discourse of colonisation and within the context of other associative afflictions such as violence, alcohol and substance abuse, alienation, and lack of formal education. It is interesting that the titular man in the intertexts does not allude to Doomadgee but his alleged victimiser, Chris Hurley, the white police officer who had

incarcerated the former and who used violent means to subjugate him, allegedly thus contributing to his death. Through the expressionist style and evocative music of Philip Glass, the documentary presents a vivid performance of how competing and antagonistic enactments of masculinities are performed within an identifiable social context. Hurley uses the imprimatur of the law and his brute physical power to overcome another male who challenged his perceived superior status.

As outlined above, the cinematic representation of Aboriginal men as victims, both demeaned and demeaning, has proliferated throughout the twentieth century in Australian screen adaptations. However, some newer, post-Mabo adaptations such as *Last Cab to Darwin* and *Australia*, present positive examples of the role undertaken by substitute father figures in the enactment of hegemonic masculinities. This appears to be a positive way forward in rejecting the status of victimhood. Rutherford suggests that for Aboriginal men the performance of an exemplary form of masculinity is inseparable from the "ethics of responsibility" (66) which she associates with the connection of men as custodians of country and not as subjugators. The modelling of such responsible enactments of masculinity by the substitute father figures facilitate this as explicated in *Last Cab to Darwin* and *Australi*a.

Trackers, guides, 'magic men' and Reconciliation.

The scarcity of representation of Aboriginal masculinity in screen adaptations has resulted in a lack of heterogeneity in the characterisation of Aboriginal men. Australian screen adaptations still employ archetypes such as the tracker, the guide and the wise community elder as a form of cinematic narrative shorthand. Such depictions are no longer embodiments of pathos but admiration, for even though Aboriginal men remain

very much within a marginalised status and station in white society, they challenge the power emanating from the hegemons of institutional power in unique and subtle ways.

Collins and Davis argue that representations of Aboriginal male trackers in *The Tracker* (2002) and in adaptations such as *Rabbit Proof Fence* and *One Night the Moon* are ambivalent, reminding the audience that "the landscape is no longer the template of an untroubled national identity grounded in European modernity" (92). This can be glimpsed in the *Evil Angels* intertexts where the advice and expertise of the Aboriginal trackers pointing to dingo tracks heading west was countermanded by the white rangers in a display of one-upmanship. Fiona Probyn supports this assertion by demonstrating how Aboriginal trackers routinely remind audiences of a limit to settler occupation and settler understanding of the land (par. 1), something which is communicated subtly in the *Evil Angels* intertexts when the Chamberlains visit an Aboriginal settlement to thank the trackers for their assistance. Jake Wilson writes that through his work and enigmatic demeanour, the tracker denotes white men's "failure to grasp the reality of the country they purport to rule" ("Looking" par. 5), which in turn poses a challenge to the supremacy of the country's white colonisers.

Homi Bhabha advises that the tracker is a more complex stereotype than once depicted because he exists as a liminal figure who is simultaneously a representative of the colonised and more than merely complicit in his interactions with the coloniser ("Of Mimicry" 127). In *Rabbit Proof Fence*, Beresford attains such a nuanced depiction by the almost total silence assumed by the tracker, Moodoo, as a way of possibly signalling his contempt for his betrayal of his own cultural traditions. Neville, the representative of hegemonic masculinity, exerts pressure on the tracker to continue his marginalised role through subservience because Moodoo's daughter is one of the young captives at the

Reserve. Additionally, Moodoo's probation period is reaching its end and his wish to return to the Kimberleys, the place of his Dreaming, also justifies his questionable participation in the recapturing of the 'Stolen' escapees. Moodoo expresses his admiration for Molly's efforts to find her way home and cover her tracks along the way.[81] In this way, despite the personal cost of his failure to recover two of the three Aboriginal escapees, the tracker is seen as victorious over the hegemonic figure of Branagh's Neville who is accorded a myriad of aids to assist in the recovery mission of the three Aboriginal youngsters. Collins and Davis write that the real Neville was "one of the nation's most enthusiastic proponents of eugenicist strategies for breeding out the colour" from Western Australia's indigenous population (139).

A hegemonic challenge to the enactment of masculinities can also be realised by further nuanced presentations of the tracker archetype. As seen in *One Night the Moon*, the Anglo-Celtic settler deemed it beneath him to even acknowledge the agency of the marginalised Aboriginal tracker and as a result, his daughter was never recovered alive. Tracker Albert Riley's superior way of reading the land in Perkins' film constitutes a challenge "over the settler's rightful ownership of it" (Probyn par. 1). The short feature, adapted from a short documentary film screened on SBS television, is an apt reminder of how hegemonic masculinity operated in the past between the more powerful settlers and the marginalised Aboriginal men. The tracker only locates the missing girl when the mother pleads with him to do so and the film invites its audience to see that tracker as a "potent image of reconciliation between black and white Australia" (Pierce xii-xiii).

[81] Molly, is the oldest of the three girls who have escaped from the Moore River Native Settlement and are trying to find their way home along the rabbit-proof fence.

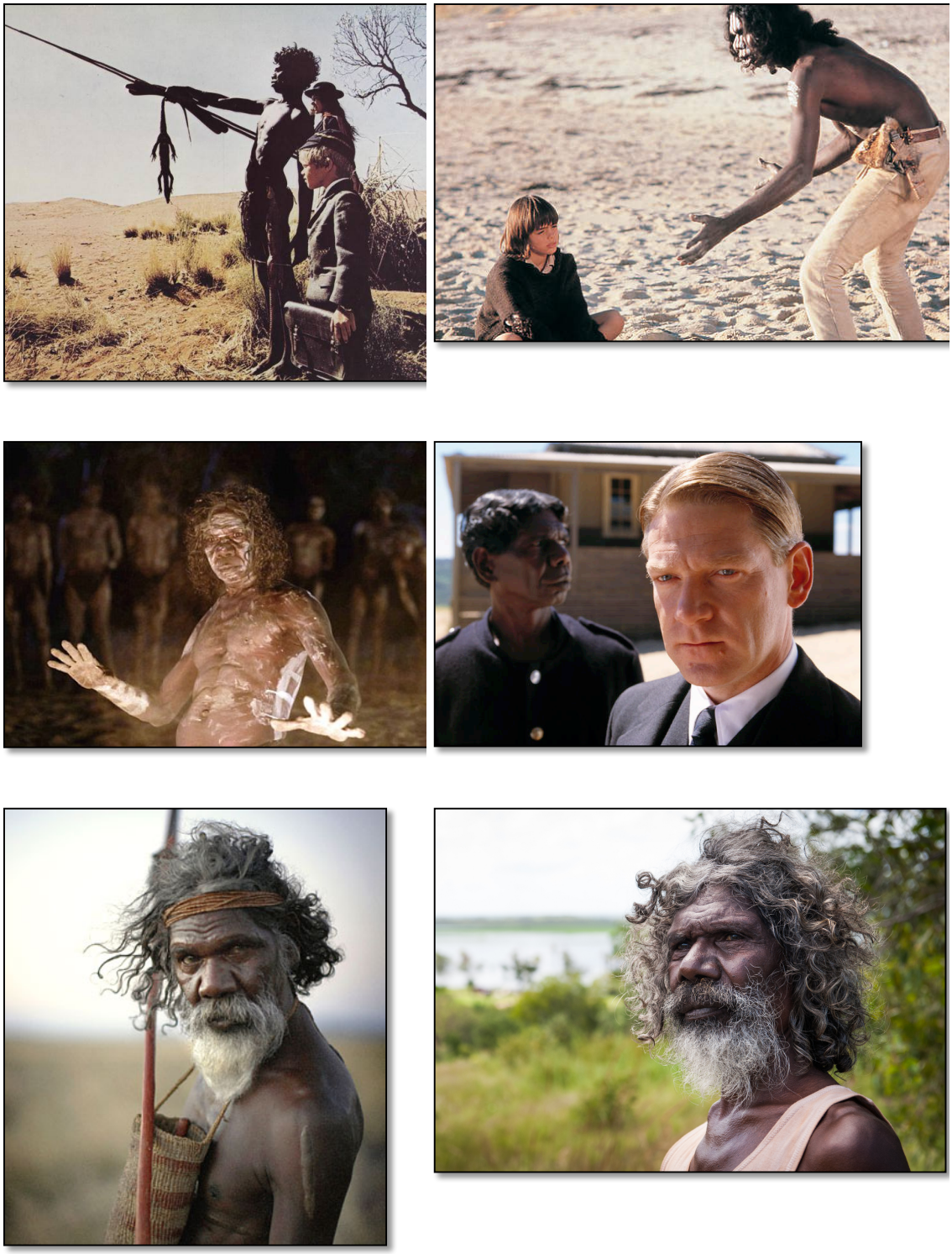

Fig. 43. The way that masculinity is represented on the screen is very much influenced by the performance of actors but also by decisions made by the art production team, seen through costume, makeup and mise en scène. Connell reminds of the importance of gesturality, "body culture and tone of voice" in the performance of gender (*The Men and*

the Boys 26). David Gulpilil has embodied nearly all enactments of Aboriginality in screen adaptations including in the pictures above, 'the noble savage' in *Walkabout*, 'the guide' in *Storm Boy*, urbanised and figure of fun, Neville Bell, in *Crocodile Dundee*, the reluctant tracker, Moodoo in *Rabbit Proof Fence*, the wise community elder, King George, in *Australia* and, finally as an older shambolic victim in *Charlie's Country*, directed by Rolf de Heer. The latter 2014 film is a collaboration between filmmaker and actor which recalls many of the actor's cinematic roles and utilises biographical elements in the exploration of the titular character. Another research project could trace the unique contribution that an actor of Mr Gulpilil's stature brings to the adaptation process.

The ability of trackers to read the land is not only an expert skill but it is also inseparable from the special connection Aboriginal people have to the land, as argued by Aileen Moreton-Robinson:

> Our ontological relationship to land, the ways that country is constitutive of us, and therefore the inalienable nature of our relation to land, marks a radical, indeed incommensurable, difference between us and the non-Indigenous. This ontological relation to land constitutes a subject position that we do not share, and which cannot be shared, with the postcolonial subject whose sense of belonging in this place is tied to migrancy (31).

The Aboriginal warrior, intent on protecting his cultural traditions, may be a colonial archetype but it is one that nonetheless is still perpetuated in adaptations, particularly ones set in the past, as the 2015 adaptation of Kate Grenville's historical fiction *The Secret River* attests. Given the historical veracity of the contestation between Aboriginal people and colonisers, the Aboriginal warrior is doomed to failure, no matter how sympathetic the portrayal is in any given adaptation. This is not to imply that Aboriginal male warriors have lacked any of the attributes that have generally characterised an

idealised enactment of masculinity globally, which include strength and ability to prevail in times of conflict despite innumerable obstacles. As shown by Magarri in *Australia*, the Aboriginal warrior, no matter how reluctant he may be, is always capable of acting with the utmost nobility, pride, and ethical rectitude as dictated by his Dreaming. Such propensity is identified by Robert Lendrum as a universally-accepted perceptions of exemplary masculinity (361).

Closely associated with the tracker and the warrior is the enigmatic figure of the guide encountered in the adaptations of *Storm Boy*, *Tracks*, and *Cloudstreet*. All three figures occupy marginalised positions within society but are nevertheless associated with dignity, pride and moral righteousness. Because of this, their agency as marginalised men can constitute a challenge to stratified enactments of masculinity. In the adaptation of Colin Thiele's much-loved children's book *Storm Boy*, a proud and knowledgeable Aboriginal man Fingerbone Bill, portrayed by David Gulpilil, assists the young protagonist to forge a bond with the injured pelican, Mr Percival. Fingerbone is an important figure in reconciliation politics, as enacted by Australian cinema. His presence in the film adaptation is more substantial, as shown by the way he is privileged amidst the landscape he is trying to protect, than in the hypotext. Whereas in the novel he only threatens to shoot at the intruding poachers, in the film he unhesitatingly does so. Fingerbone does not possess supernatural ability as shown in *The Last Wave* (1977), but an ability to overhaul the gulf between the world of nature and that of men.

Fig. 44. Kelton Pelt as Bob Crab, the mystical guide in *Cloudstreet* whose vigilance and management is able to exorcise the ghosts of colonial oppression. Photo by David Dare Parker on his website.

The character of Mr Eddy is an energetic dignified and mischievous Aboriginal community elder who provides invaluable assistance to the protagonist in the naturalistic film adaptation of *Tracks*, directed by John Curran in 2013. The desert areas traversed by Robyn Davidson, played by Mia Wasikowska, are sacred to the local indigenous community and the filmmakers took great care to consult the local custodians of the land about what they could visually show and what they could disclose in the film. Davidson is quoted in the Press Kit of *Tracks* extolling Mr Eddy's cultural status as a community elder, "he is somebody who has gone through levels of knowledge called The Dreaming… an intellectual feat of the highest magnitude" (11). Such cooperative filmmaking demanded a thoughtful casting of the Aboriginal elder character of Mr Eddy, who in the Davidson memoir only spoke Pitjantjatjara. The chosen actor, Rolley Mintuma, was approved by the real Mr Eddy's family and like the man he portrays, he

too speaks Pitjantjatjara and is a community elder. To elicit a more naturalistic performance from Mintuma, the director allowed him to improvise in his scenes with Wasikowska, resulting in a marked difference of characterisation in the adaptation intertexts but without compromising the function and likeability of the character.

The representation of the Aboriginal man as a guide to drive the reconciliation process can be seen in changes made in the adaptation of Tim Winton's novel of *Cloudstreet* into the 2011 miniseries. The part of the unnamed 'blackfella' in Winton's *Cloudstreet* assumes a more corporeal and crucial role in the adaptation as a sign of the changed cultural landscape in Australia and its relationship with Aboriginal Australians in the twenty years since the novel's publication. The unnamed blackfella in Winton's text appears periodically as a guide for the white occupants of 'no 1 Cloud Street' and his presence imbues the narrative with an element of gothic mystery and suspense. Even though the motives of the Aboriginal man remain undisclosed in the novel, it is evident to the reader that his activities have an ameliorating effect on the spectres that haunt the house. When Bob Crab, played by Kelton Pell as he is called in the Saville adaptation, first appears at the Cloud Street house, ostensibly to sell 'props', he is referred to as a blackfella and is described as being "tall and thin, the colour of a burnt kettle, and he had a shoulderload of long dry branches" (61). The Aboriginal man only becomes aware of the unwelcomed house spirits at this juncture in the novel whereas in the adaptation Bob is haunted by the spirits of the Aboriginal women who plague the house and is unable to keep away. In the hypertext, Bob is presented as a more knowing and more corporeal figure. He sternly admonishes his young sons trying to sell crabs to the occupants of Cloud Street "don't you never go near that house" (Disc 1, 26:54) and then promises the boys, and by association the viewer, "I got a big mob of stories for this place" (Disc 1, 27:03). When

the young boys obediently move away an eerie atonal music is heard as Bob Crab confidently warns, "I'm here house. I'm watching and waiting" (Disc 1, 27:03). Before Bob has the chance to finish his scene, we are provided with a shot of him from the perspective of his nemesis, the house, as he promises "one day I'll come back and finish that story proper way" (Disc 1, 27:34). Bob, the ever-present mystical guide, is also the person who advises Sam not to sell the house in both texts.

The wise elder, as seen in *Dead Heart* and *Australia*, is another trope used in the representation of Aboriginal men and pertains to the special knowledge gained by men during their initiation ceremonies that includes expert knowledge about the land itself and their duty of remaining its custodians. The trope of the wise elder is associated with wisdom and magic and the special power that he can exert over spirits and the natural realm. As a cinematic archetype in Australia, the legacy of the wise community elder that also subsumes the role of the tracker can be traced to the noble savage archetype that originated in Australian literature early in the nineteenth century. Poppy in *Dead Heart* and King George in *Australia* are just two of the representations of the wise mystical Aboriginal man in Australian screen adaptations whose authority extends over the mystical realms and impacts not only on Aboriginal men, young and old, but over white men and the natural world as well. Both men are middle-aged with ravaged physical features, loners, comfortable in the world of the desert, and accustomed to practising transhumanence, and they possess power over the spirits of Dreaming. *Dead Heart* is narrated from the point of view of community male elder Poppy, which subverts viewer expectations, accustomed to witnessing narratives involving Aboriginal men from the point of the view of non-Aboriginal characters. Chris Justice writes "the film's treatment of intercultural communication in a postcolonialist setting is one of its

most endearing features" (par. 4). Poppy is dignified, proud, and absolutist in his views and ways of thinking. His anger is demonstrated at several junctures in the film, particularly when he perceives that his cultural beliefs and traditions have been trampled.

Sylvia Shaw argues that despite the mystical power demonstrated by 'magic men', such as Poppy and King George, the overall representation of the mystical man could be seen as a way to "naturalise racist assumptions within the symbols and mythology of dominant Australian culture" (2). Luhrmann, supported by Langton, sees the representation of the community elder positively, as a way of communicating and integrating traditional wisdom and knowledge into a reconciled Australia. Timothy Corrigan identifies a type of emerging paratextuality in his speculation of the importance of referencing "an image bank" (xvi), which is useful in adaptation studies. *Australia* as a digital palimpsest relies on the signification of a myriad of images encountered in other texts to imbue it with polysemic significance. It succeeds in enacting the conflict between the Aboriginal and Anglo-Celtic characters defining colonial and postcolonial history (Cook 117). Several critics, including Langton, have credited Luhrmann with repositioning the history of the 'stolen generations' as a central national narrative.

King George's heir, Nullah, shares the older man's status as a 'magic man' and can be seen as "a redemptive emblem of reconciliation in cultural imaginings" (Conor 97). It can be argued that Nullah is the embodied accretion of the complex battle between the hegemonic masculinity of colonial/settler mentality, as enacted by the boy's biological father Fletcher, and the marginalised masculinity, as represented by his grandfather and uncle, King George and Magarri respectively. To a lesser extent too, by his adoptive father, The Drover. Nullah uses the supernatural abilities endowed on him by his

grandfather, King George in various key junctures in the film. Conor views the use of the 'half caste' child as a way "to incite feelings of national belonging is an entrenched representational convention in the Australian imaginary, and the appeal of this trope hinges on the repudiation of the enunciative position of Aboriginal maternity" (99).

Nullah is the "focal point for the film's ideas about storytelling, dream and myth and for the exploration of relationships to the land" (Cook 119). Nullah, the biological product of colonialism, incorporates the 'picanninny' archetype that has been explored by Herbert in his novels, *Capricornia* (1938) and *Poor Fellow My Country* (1975), which serve as two of the film's numerous hypotexts.[82] The name of Nullah's mother, Daisy, ensures that the story of Daisy, another 'creamy' child, which is how Nullah refers to himself, at the core of *Rabbit Proof Fence* also resonates with the viewer. Pam Cook reminds audiences that Nullah's cross-cultural identity is highlighted through the language he uses (120) but more importantly *Australia*'s narrative is seen exclusively from his perspective. Nullah's masculinity is enacted as an evolving process, a site of contestation between hegemonic and marginalised masculinity. The former is embodied by his father, Fletcher, as well as King Carney, both of whom are representatives of colonial archetypes and partly, by the mythical Drover, who becomes his nurturing father figure and is the living embodiment of heroic myth. Marginalised masculinity can be seen as the domain of King George and the fact that the agency of Aboriginal community, including their myths, beliefs and rituals, prevail at the film's denouement, through providing King George with temporary custody of Nullah, attests to the successful challenge to hegemonic masculinities.

*

[82] The word 'picanninny' is used by the Gloria Carney character in *Australia*.

In this chapter, I have examined how Aboriginal men have been subordinated and conscripted in the service of their paternalistic white counterparts. This delegation of Aboriginal men to the status of other is used politically to deprive them of control and power. The cultural supremacy of the whites is also used to fortify their own sense of belonging and to obfuscate issues pertaining to the legitimacy of land rights for Aboriginal people. I have argued that Aboriginal men tend to be represented mostly within the dual discourses of infantilisation and vanquishment in Australian screen adaptations. Such discourses combine to produce their own limited and limiting stereotypical representations of Aboriginal men that enact the very marginalisation that prevents them from enjoying the power and status associated with more celebrated manifestations of masculinities.

Chapter 8

Multiculturalism Strikes Back

As argued throughout the thesis, one of the major advantages of the adaptation process is the power that multimodality affords in transforming a ruminative literary work into something generative and axiomatic. This chapter concerns itself with screen images of ethnic representation as seen through screen adaptations in the forty-year-period examined in this work. It is not about the contributions that various ethnic minority groups have made, and continue to make to Australia's social, political and cultural fabric. This chapter will address marginalised masculinities, through a multicultural lens focussing on the representation of ethnicity, not just as a forty-year historical account of

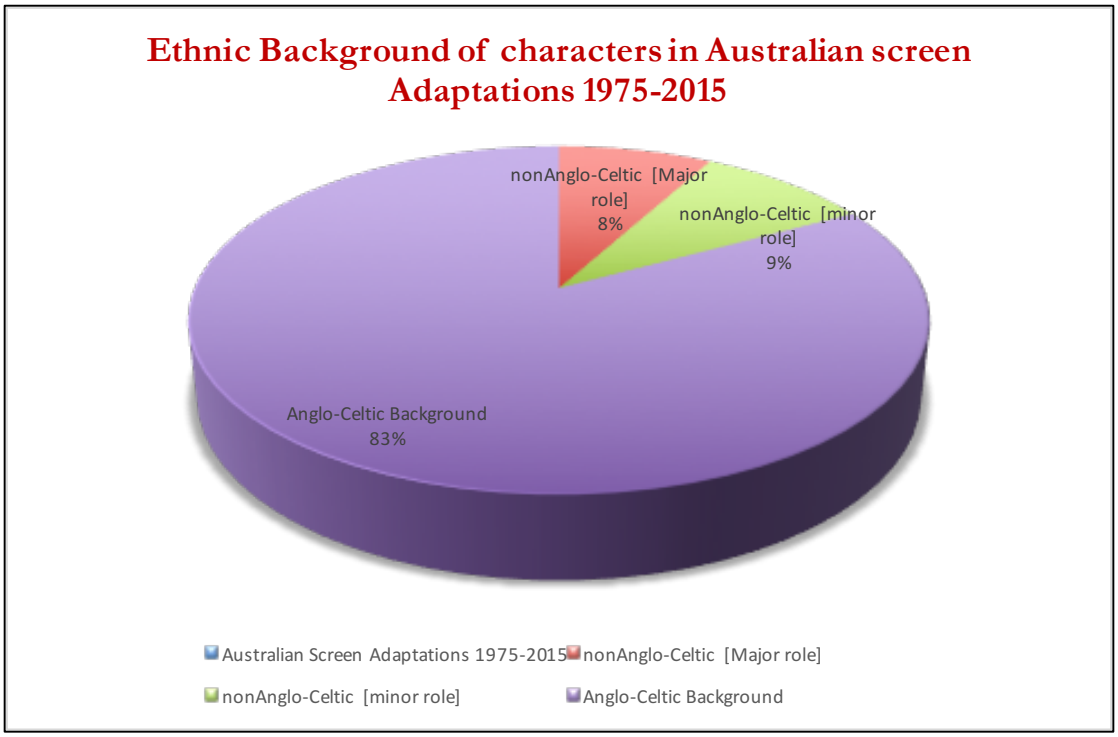

Fig. 45. A visual representation of the ethnic background of the characters in the 362 screen adaptations examined as part of this work.

ethnic representation on screen, but rather in terms of how the agency associated with enactments of ethnic-masculinity can both be accommodated within, and constitute a challenge to the framework of hegemonic masculinity.

Despite the long history of migration in Australia, the representation, scrutiny or indeed problematisation of ethnic minorities, has been limited on Australian screens (Wimmer 128) as shown in Fig. 45. This is not only because it is assumed that ethnic representational inclusion will not be financially advantageous but also in terms of inclusion and identificatory positioning. And Hollywood continues to operate under the assumption that white characters have the widest appeal. Whitewashing has been gaining traction in popular culture in 2016 prompting Andrew Weaver to state "Hollywood's sort of given up on the idea that you can have crossover success with a minority cast. You get this discrimination in the casting of roles, where they're going to cast whites if at all possible to maximize the audience"[83] (Scherker part 7) Nonetheless, the screen adaptations addressed in this chapter examine the cultural life of migrants, or more often, second-generation migrants in Australia and can be classified as 'postcolonial ethnic' films (Simpson et al. 16). The marginalisation of Australian-ethnic men, and of course women, has traditionally been seen in a problematic context, particularly in how such men can assimilate within the Australian community and culture, given differences in beliefs, customs, physiognomy, language, religion, aesthetics, and values. As a result, ethnic men were often stigmatised as 'the other', recognisably similar but not what is perceived as the normative, white Anglo-Celtic Australian.[84] This construction of the

[83] Assistant professor Weaver of Indiana University has studied representation of minority characters in Hollywood films.

[84] This term denotes men from a Non-English Speaking Background (NESB). The acronym CALD, to describe people who 'culturally and linguistically diverse', is also used in contemporary Australia.

other has already been discussed in the previous chapter focussing on the representation of Aboriginal male characters. Richard Dyer reminds that white people are not perceived in terms of race and continue to function in a normative manner. He writes, "other people are raced, we are just people" (1). This subject positioning as 'the other' can account for nearly all representations of ethnicity in screen adaptations, where characters are either problematized, castigated for their actions, or presented as mediators – forever in the service of more dominant and privileged individuals.

In reference to the examination of masculinity, and as explored earlier in this work, what Dyer describes as being normative – or just people – within the Australian historical and cultural context, is the enduring figure of the working-class larrikin battler who occupies such an illustrious place in the enactment of masculinity in contemporary Australia. Despite this authorisation, Richard White claims that the working-class larrikin battler has always been a 'construct'; the Aussie battler is, "an accretion of an anti-authoritarian impulse associated with Australia's convict origins, the larrikinism of the bush worker, the prowess of the digger and the physical athleticism of the urban battler" (79-82).

Accordingly, positive representations of ethnic Australians in screen adaptations have aligned with this national imperative, valuing those men who affiliate themselves with the status of the working-class battler and have condemned those who do not. The classic Australian adaptation *They're a Weird Mob* (1966) provides the prototype for this. Italian journalist Nino Culotta needs to dispense with his cosmopolitan ways and become a builder's labourer as part of his immersive and assimilationist journey of becoming an Australian. More recently, *Red Dog* also presents another Italian migrant, Vanno, as an ordinary working-class battler who is a valuable member of the mining community in the

Pilbara, despite his foibles, which are used for comic effect.

Certainly both Nino and Vanno are racial stereotypes of the exuberant exotic migrant, but both adaptations were very successful at the box-office supporting Keith Jacobs' argument that monetary imperatives often underpin the use of racial stereotypes (116). Much is made from the differences of characters like Nino and Vanno and perhaps such differences have given rise to the visibility and popularity of ethnic characters in contrast to the normative Anglo-Celtic white man. Jacobs ponders whether the impulse to mark ethnic men as the 'other' and as distinct from their Australian Anglo-Celtic counterparts

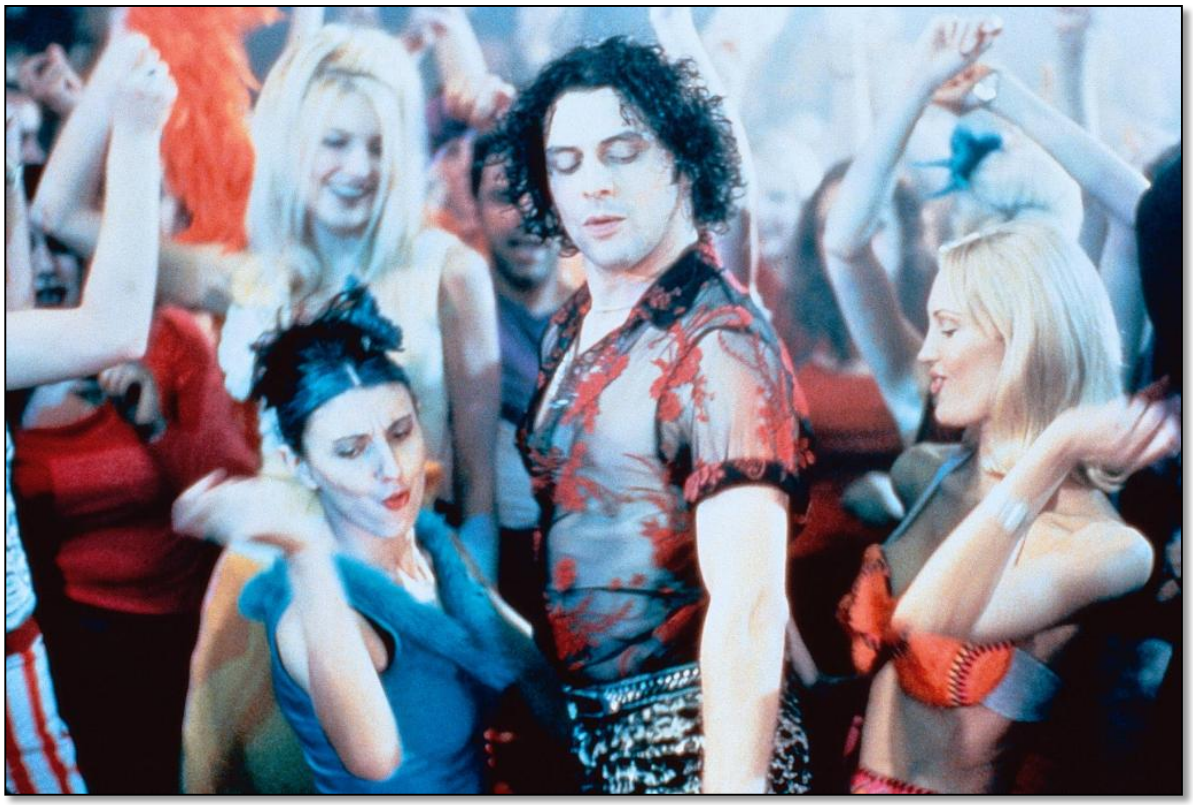

Fig. 46. Frank in *The Wog Boy* is one example how ethnic men are invariably represented through otherness, often as hyperkinetic, overconfident and proudly ethnocentric Australians. Despite this, only those, who align themselves with the role of the working-class battler, like the restaurant worker Frank, are endorsed by the normative white Anglo Celtic white men.

has facilitated a "pronounced masculinity as a marker of ethnic identification" (117). This pronounced masculinity can be represented through a number of manifestations, such as the unbridled sexuality of Frank in *The Wog Boy*.

Before interrogating the representation and marginalisation of ethnic masculinity further, it is important to briefly consider the context in which such masculinity is enacted in Australia. The representation of ethnic men on the Australian screen does not take place in a cultural vacuum but rather in a cinematic, historical, sociocultural and political context. The absence of an ethnic presence during the film revival in Australia in the 1970s was highly noticeable despite the declaration by Federal Labor Minister Al Grassby in 1973 that Australia was a multicultural society and the arrival of the first 'boat people' from Asia. As James Bennett notes, Australia's 'film renaissance' in the 1970s did not reflect the changing multicultural fabric of Australian society and, in fact, entrenched the notion of a homogeneous society steeped in the mythology of colonialism. (64).

Multiculturalism is a political discourse that stands in marked contrast to the assimilationist models that prevailed in Australia's post-war historical and political culture. Multiculturalism in Australia was a pragmatic and economic example of social engineering that arose from the erosion of assimilationist policies to keep the 'melting pot' of Australia unmistakably British. Multiculturalism has been embraced in Australia throughout 1975-2015, because socially, culturally and economically, the Australian national identity could no longer sustain the Eurocentric myth of British origin (Miller T 18). Multiculturalism occupies a unique position in Australia, not only due to its co-dependent relationship with postcolonialism, but also because locally it is identified within a homogenising impulse, treating all those of non-Anglo-Celtic origin as the same. Another distinguishing factor of multiculturalism in Australia is the way it is understood

here as 'a history of migration' which subsequently creates an uneasy relationship with Aboriginal communities, particularly in terms of land rights. The confusion between multiculturalism and 'political correctness' that has proliferated in other societies like the USA, has been largely absent in Australia's history. Multiculturalism, however, is not reflected in the celebrated films associated with Australian New Wave cinema. As part of the impetus of filmmakers during this cultural renaissance to define *the* Australian identity, producers and directors alike, tended to promulgate a "more singular monocultural Anglo-Australian definition of national identity" (Rattigan 23). This is despite the noteworthy development in Australian literary history of revisionism that has been taking place since 1975 as a way of "recognising that previously marginalised or excluded peoples have a contribution to make to the process of redefining the nation" (Mead 550). Also of interest in this thesis is the observation by Clare Bradford that throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the representations of non-Anglo-Celtic Australians, particularly men, were constructed through the perspective of privileged Anglo-Celtic Australian filmmakers, producers, and writers (294).[85]

Homi Bhabha in *Nation and Narration* (1990) emphasises how nationalism involves a construction of linear narratives of nation, culture, and identity. However, critical multiculturalism critiques this assertion, noting that this reality is grounded in colonial Australian conceptions of nation and race (Housel 448). It is worth noting that such perceptions are the very ones which have given rise to the elevation of the working-class battler as the idealised Australian man. The impulse for inclusivity in Australian cultural and political life, which has been a defining feature of multicultural society since the bicentennial celebrations in 1988, can be viewed as another, albeit subtle way, of

[85] Examples include *Promised Woman*, *Harp in the South*, *The Heartbreak Kid*, *Moving Out*, *Strictly Ballroom*, *Death in Brunswick*, *Five Times Dizzy* and *Romper Stomper*.

promoting hegemonic masculinity by obfuscating systems of power. Ghassan Hage in *White Nation* (2000) also sees multiculturalism as a "mode of domination [that] is presented as a form of egalitarianism" (87). Correspondingly, I concur with David Callahan's assertion that at so many levels of Australian filmic representation, 'ethnicity' within the nation operates both as activator of meanings and concealer of them (95-6), as the chapter will demonstrate.

I will explore this seemingly paradoxical impulse for ethnicity to function as both activator and concealer of meaning in Australian screen adaptations further in this chapter through six intertwining categories. Specifically, I will trace how ethnic masculinity is marginalised in the national narrative and how this marginalisation has been disseminated, as well as challenged, in screen adaptations between 1975 and 2015.

The Ethnic other.

Definitions of being an Australian pivot on the juxtaposition between who is perceived as racially normative and who is delegated to the peripheral, and often demonised, category of 'the other'. Within the hegemonic framework of masculinities, Anglo-Celtic Australians occupy a more central, and desirable, position than those marked as 'the other'. Due to their non-Anglo-Celtic ethnicity, men are relegated to the margins of society, leaving them with little, to no, access to the patriarchal dividend, that is the claim of those who are more privileged. The marginalisation of ethnic men is often tantamount to a type of demonisation in order to reiterate more mainstream attitudes and values. Both diasporic adaptations, *Promised Woman* (1975) and *Cathy's Child* (1979) illustrate this point by stressing the hypermasculine machismo of their respective Greek male characters and denouncing their domineering patriarchal actions. Both texts suggest that

hypermasculinity functions within a compensatory mode, resulting from marginalisation and dire economic conditions. Thus the dominant male roles, which may be typical of the homeland, are seen as deviant, xenophobic, and non-Australian.

The representation of ethnic minority characters as 'the other', however, is best demonstrated in the adaptations of *The Harp in the South* and *Lantana*. The former was adapted some four decades after the Ruth Park novel was first published in 1949 and encodes a hierarchical system of social relations and masculinity, that interestingly enough, still resonates in Australian society despite the many challenges to it since the embracing of multiculturalism by the Whitlam government in the early 1970s. Park's status as a chronicler of everyday Sydney life provides for her readers fleeting clichéd representations of Jewish, Italian, Nordic and Chinese characters. These ethnic and static characters do little to advance the principal narrative but they do perform an important function in the lives of the "ethnically unnamed", and therefore privileged, Australian protagonists such as the Darcy family (Simpson *Diasporas* 34).

The adaptation of *The Harp in the South* is a reminder that citizens of the United Kingdom and Ireland are considered to be normative 'Australians' but others, whose racial background differs, are only afforded a "hyphenated status of identity" (Teo 135). Such diverse cultural groups in the text include people of Swedish, Italian, Chinese, and Jewish backgrounds who, despite their respective prejudices, live peacefully – other than Roie's assault by unruly Dutch sailors – in the Surry Hills community. The status of these men, including Mr Gunnarson, Mr Siciliano, Lick Jimmy and Tommy Mendel, as authentic Australians, is compromised not only by their ethnicity but also by their failure to live up to the idealised masculine narrative of Australian men that requires them to be hard-

working, loyal, physically strong and capable of acts that could be described as heroic (Ward 17).

All four aforementioned characters are hardworking battlers who remain marginalised throughout the narrative. Chinese Lick Jimmy, the closest neighbour of the Darcys, is a constant presence in the community of Surry Hills who despite his various neighbourly acts of kindness and generosity towards the Darcys, is never integrated into the life of the community due to his ethnicity. Unlike Hugh Darcy, Jimmy remains very much at the margins of community, as he acknowledges himself, "me old heathen"/"queer old coot" (Ep2, 1:23:00). Also on the periphery of this society are the exotic and determined Mr Gunnarson, the Swedish organ grinder, who determinedly woos the cantankerous Miss Sheily, and the affable, but sexually rapacious Mr Siciliano, owner of the local corner store that the Darcys occasionally frequent. Mr Siciliano, father to countless children, is a very minor character in the narrative, but he is one of the earliest embodiments of 'hyper-ethnic sexuality', a stereotype which appears to be ubiquitous in screen adaptations since 1975. Also of working-class background is Tommy Mendel, Rowena's first steady boyfriend, who dutifully works at his uncle's store in Haymarket. Mendel is a dually marked outsider in post-war Australia because of his Jewish background and his physical disability. Notably, however, it is his status, as a working-class man, that convinces Rowena he might be a potential partner for her. When his sexually predatory advances are rejected by Rowena, he is portrayed as threatening and menacing, "he snarled in a sudden fury: 'It's all the same with all your sheilas. Giving the bloke the come-on for all your worth, and then all at once, biff, it's turned off at the main" (Park 85). F. C. Molloy argues, "Tommy Mendel had a deprived childhood, and the legacy has been a closing-off of feeling and a resorting to cunning and self-pity."

(323). Mendel represents a threat to the stability and continued reverence for the patriarchal family as represented in both the novel and its television adaptation. Even though *The Harp in the South*, has been adapted within the tradition of the nostalgic period piece, its use of ethnic stereotypes is, nonetheless, indistinguishable from more recent examples in other screen adaptations. This is but one indication that the use of ethnic stereotypes in literary and cinematic representations continues unabated, not only in Australia but in other English-speaking societies as well, despite dramatic changes in socio-political circles over the last four decades.

The visibility of screen texts is helpful in illuminating the 'othering' of ethnic minorities, even when this is carried out in a subtle manner, as is the case in *Lantana* - an adaptation of the Andrew Bovell play *Speaking in Tongues*. Minelle Mahtani claims the 'othering' of the ethnic minorities, such as the D'Amatos in *Lantana*, through suspicion, isolation and distrust, reinforces "hegemonic whiteness fostering racism in the process" (104).

The battler archetype is both challenged and reaffirmed through ethnicity in *Lantana* as the married couple, Paula and Nik D'Amato, are the only couple whose marriage is strong, and built on trust, despite the considerable financial strain of surviving on a single income. The otherness of D'Amato played by actor Vince Colosimo is established early in the adaptation of the play when the affable family man is associated with the titular noxious weed that intertwines itself with other plants and eventually smothers them. Early in the film, D'Amato is seen throwing a woman's shoe into the bush, an action which establishes him as a figure of mistrust. The proposition that ethnic masculinity is somehow deficient, when juxtaposed with the normative Anglo-Celtic one is suggested in *Lantana* by the presentation of the relationship between D'Amato and his wife, Paula. Here, the enactment of relations between the two, even though sexual in nature, can be

interpreted from Paula's perspective as more maternal than equal. This is indicated by her dismissal of Nik's suspicion that Jane harbours sexual feelings for him as well as her protectiveness and defiance when D'Amato is arrested. Catherine Wood argues that "Nik's gestures, stance and facial expressions show him to be more like a boy that has grown older than a maturing male" (148). In this way, D'Amato, the only visibly marked ethnic man in *Lantana*, is represented through the discourse of infantilisation as an embodiment of 'the other' and an expressive contrast to the other Australian men in the adaptation.

Lantana, a multi-strand narrative, embeds a number of characters from various ethnic backgrounds within Australia's "new inclusionary multicultural state" (Rutherford J. 12) and consequently this obfuscates issues of ethnicity in favour of issues pertaining to sexuality and sexual mores. Anthony LaPaglia plays Detective Leon Zat and Leah Purcell

Fig. 46. Often, ethnic men are depicted as figures of mistrust in Australian film. Vince Colosimo as Nik D'Amato in *Lantana.*

plays Detective Claudia Wiss but no attempt has been deemed necessary in *Lantana* to make mention of their Italian identity or Aboriginality, respectively. Only D'Amato is recognizably, and visibly, ethnic, not so much because of his language patterns and diction, but rather because of his appearance, gesturality, costuming and the casting of Vince Colosimo. This otherness is embodied through the Latin music that features predominantly in the soundtrack but also through D'Amato's overt masculinity, which is not only the scopophilic covetous object of Jane's desire but also a performance which is associated with unbridled sexuality. This masculinity is potentially threatening and out of control, as evidenced by Valerie's reaction during her attempted rescue by D'Amato. Jane's numerous lustful glances at D'Amato detaches him from "his domestic context as father and husband" (Duncanson et al. 15) but also perpetuates the representation of ethnic masculinity and sexuality as simultaneously desirable and threatening. As suggested by Kirsty Duncanson, Catriona Elder, and Murray Pratt, the film does rely on gothic tropes, such as framing Colosimo's physique threateningly in the vehicle's headlights and the metonym of a cigarette as a phallic echo, and by doing so, casts serious doubts about Nik's innocence (14).

Hence, even though all the characters mentioned in the adaptations of *The Harp in the South* and *Lantana* can easily be categorised within the celebrated working-class archetype of the battler, it is their ethnicity that isolates them as 'the other' and keeps them on the margins of the hegemonic masculinity framework.

Coming of age through ethnicity.

The seemingly paradoxical impulse for ethnicity to function as both activator and concealer of meaning and identity in Australian screen adaptations can be scrutinised

further in a number of texts that feature young ethnic males at their narrative core. This handful of diasporic films use the bildungsroman genre in communicating the coming of age of young people from a multicultural background. The focus of this section of the chapter, the films *Moving Out* and *The Heartbreak Kid*, present their troubled ethnic protagonists as marginalised due to issues of both ethnicity and economic status. The way in which the youthful protagonists in these films, Gino and Nick, are able to mature, is through acceptance of their marginalised status and by using this, as a source of agency to redefine themselves and accept the dual aspects of their identity. Hamid Naficy uses the term interstitial to describe films featuring non Anglo-Celtic characters confronting issues of cultural identity (40) and I will argue that the process of maturation for young characters from ethnic communities in Australia involves not only the acceptance of interstitiality, in regards to their identity, but also a conscious espousal of the working-class battler ethos that is associated with, and privileged, in the enactment of ethnic masculinity.

Tomorrow When the War Began, *Looking for Alibrandi* and *Moving Out* are three adaptations depicting young ethnic Australians. All three are genre films using the tropes of the teenpic. In the latter two, especially, the cultural ossification associated with older ethnic parents is contrasted to the myth of modernity represented by their children. The stagnated cultural mores revealed in these adaptations are firmly entrenched in the cultural traditions of the former motherlands of the characters, which inevitably are rooted in patriarchal values. Contrastingly, their children embrace a type of modernity, which, as explicated in *Looking for Alibrandi* and *Moving Out*, is aligned with an Anglo-Celtic identity and rooted in popular culture. In *Tomorrow When the War Began,* for instance, a text Gahame Huggan describes as a "revived white fantasy of alien invasion"

(129), larrikinism is co-opted within inclusive masculinities and multicultural voices. But any closer detailed scrutiny of how masculinities manifest themselves within a homosocial and familiar zone is dispensed in favour of the tropes of the bildungsroman that dominates not only Marsden's text but the literature of young adults generally.

The aspects of Australian identity espoused by Gino in *Moving Out,* as well as Lee and Homer in *Tomorrow When the War Began,* are indistinguishable from character traits associated with working class masculinity such as larrikinism, a mistrust of authority, partiality for football and a love of popular culture. According to Neil Rattigan, "the capture of working-class and immigrant speech patterns in *Moving Out*, is startling because of its rarity in Australian cinema" (220). *Moving Out* focusses on issues of intergenerational cultural entrapment, through the eyes of the character of young Gino Condello. This includes the performance of a certain type of masculinity that is endorsed as acceptable within the relevant cultural Italian community in the film. The screen adaptation commences with a football match, where Condello and his fellow inner-city ethnic classmates are belittled through various derogative names such as "chocks" and "wogs". In fact, a plethora of Collingwood football memorabilia in his bedroom not only adds to the neorealist style of the film but it establishes Condello as yet another working-class Australian character experiencing a crisis of identity. A number of key scenes at Condello's school disclose the educational disengagement of his classmates. Such scenes demonstrate that the marginalisation experienced by Condello is not unique but typical of a whole generation of young ethnic men. Away from his oppressive home environment Condello readily embraces the persona of a risk-taking rebel who smokes, frequents "the five finger discounts" and tries to seek sexual gratification. Whist at home Condello feels alienated from his Italian family and is conflicted by his allegiances. The

proposed move to the outer suburb of Doncaster becomes an ordeal for Condello and his internal conflict is further exacerbated with the arrival of a new Italian family which is to take possession of his current family home in North Fitzroy. Condello's growing romantic feelings for his newly-arrived cousin, Maria, also become a catalyst for confronting his anxiety over his confused identity.

Condello feels anxiety and alienation as he experiences the two institutions he is forced to co-inhabit: the home and the school. At home, only the Calabrian dialect is spoken. For Condello, the Calabrese dialect is an atrophied language connected with a bygone

Fig. 48. Vince Colosimo as Gino Condello in *Moving Out* - the actor's first screen role. Young Gino is interestingly enough, positioned here between his Italian heritage (represented by his authoritative father) and the white police officer (representing his Australian reality). His mother who only speaks Calabrian in the film, remains a peripheral figure on the left.

lifestyle that is firmly entrenched in the past. Even though he is forced by societal and economic circumstances to act as a conduit between his parents and the society at large by translating for them, Condello aligns himself with the patterns of speech and the idiom of colloquial English. This contrasts with the rarefied English which is forced on him by his English teacher Mr. Aitkens who appears to only be teaching nationalistic texts from Australia's Colonial period.

Condello's measured observation of the various models of masculinity enacted before him is telling. In one of the most striking scenes in the film, he observes the hyperkinetic and loud masculinity personified by his father and uncle and his snide facial expression signals to the audience that Condello finds this kind of masculinity inauthentic and irrelevant. The streets of the inner-city become a liberating refuge for Condello, away from the pressures and constraints of both school and home. Condello is unwilling to accept and emulate the role models of normative masculinity he witnesses at school, specifically the dismissive arrogance of his Science teacher or the defeated resignation of his English teacher. His Australian friend Allan, although sympathetic to Condello's inner conflict and anxiety, views this as symptomatic of intergenerational conflict.

In one of Condello's emotional outbursts early in the film, he confidently declares, "you come out here as a wog. You stay one, or you don't. It's as simple as that" (12:01). But by the conclusion of the narrative, Condello's rejection of absolute binaries is seen as a sign of his maturity, or his coming of age through embracing his ethnicity. Condello's decision to accept the move to Doncaster with his parents is not simply an acceptance of his Italian identity and a rejection of his Australian one, it is also an acceptance of his interstitiality and a mature recognition that the simplistic modes of Italian and Australian identities he viewed previously are, in fact, both more nuanced and complex than first

imagined. Rattigan proposes that Condello's consent in moving to Doncaster is both "a measure of his maturity on his part and a step back from the Australianisation that has separated him from his parents" (220).

As with *Moving Out*, produced a decade earlier, the opening segment of *The Heartbreak Kid* (1993) is depicted in a foreign language without English subtitles which highlights the perceived isolation of the young protagonist whose fluency in his 'mother' tongue is compromised by his experiences as an Australian-born second culture youth. This dramatic opening also identifies for the audience the vexed zone of multiculturalism which will be the stage for the enactment of Nick Polides's masculinity. The film adaptation of the play for young adults did find an audience in 1993, and was somewhat surprisingly critically well received, given its confronting and controversial subject-matter of a sexual liaison, which was not intimated in the play, between a teacher and her student and the fact that it was released at a time which saw the waning of multiculturalism as a unifying narrative of Australian identity (Brisbane 409).

The context of the film and its locale in an urban environment was part of the cultural shift in Australian cinema, away from the historicism of the past and the movement away from the AFC landscape film. One notable change in the adaptation from the Richard Barrett play for young adults to feature film for mature cinema audiences concerns the lead character. Sixteen-year-old Nicky Poulos in the play is transformed into seventeen-year-old Nick Polides.[86] The changed surname of the lead character, as well as the ejection of the diminutive form 'Nicky', are both significant and imbue his journey from adolescence to manhood with another level of inherent significance since the Greek meaning of the surname 'Polides' means 'citizen'. Seen

[86] In Greek 'poulos' is normally a suffix in surnames signalling that the person is 'a son of'.

from this semantic perspective, Nick's quest for masculinity and heterosexuality is equated to a search for social order and communal acceptance.

The multiple camera shots and vivid style of the filming, privilege the lead character of Polides and attempt to communicate his exuberance and unbridled energy. Polides actively pursues his teacher who has already announced her engagement to another man, seemingly flaunting the rules, both formal and tacit, governing the homosocial and patriarchal order. This unrelenting pursuit takes place in a variety of settings during Christina Papadopoulos's engagement party, at the supermarket, in her home, in the car park, the classroom and the locker room. Polides's obsessional pursuit of his teacher as a sexual mate is aligned with his aspirations of becoming a professional soccer player and assuming his rightful position in a society of heterosexual males, albeit a patriarchal and domineering one. It is noteworthy that the film's conclusion takes place on the soccer field, where Christina, having lost her job, broken her engagement, and caused her family untold pain and humiliation, promises that she will reconsider their relationship after she completes her postgraduate studies abroad.

Again, similar to *Moving Out*, the enactment of masculinity for the lead character in *The Heartbreak Kid* is an unconscious choice between two binary ways of being a man, the performance of masculinity as shown by his father George Polides and that of school sport master, Mr Southgate. Southgate is an authoritarian, inflexible and imposing character whose affiliation and commitment to 'real' football (AFL) is oppositional to Nick's passion for the "wog game" of soccer, played professionally by Nick's father in Greece. The juxtaposition of football and masculinity is further iterated by the transposition of the hypertext from Sydney to Melbourne.[87] Even though AFL is growing in popularity in NSW it was considered only a

[87] Melbourne is also the setting for a host of other 'ethnic' screen texts including *Moving Out*, *The Wog Boy*, *Kings of Mykonos*, *Nirvana Street Murders, Death in Brunswick*, *Head On*, *Romulus My Father, Romper Stomper, The Castle*, *The Slap*, *Barracuda*, *Acropolis Now* and (partly) *Strictly Ballroom*.

passing curiosity in the early 1990s. Jessica Carniel correctly observes that soccer was "derided as a migrants' sport and subsequently associated with ethnic conflict and violence" (74), which is precisely how it is viewed in the film by Southgate and his players. George Polides, played by Nick Lathouris, provides a positive and sympathetic portrayal of an Australian migrant, an embodiment of the classic battler who is working hard to support his family as a single parent. This is accentuated in the adaptation through the death of his wife, who was very much alive in the stageplay. The significant change between the play and its film counterpart facilitates more complexity of characterisation, since Polides assumes a nurturing role towards his sister. Despite his difficult personal circumstances and the degree of poverty that George Polides confronts, evidenced through the mise-en-scène in his house, he is, nonetheless, civically minded when he agrees to coach his son's school soccer team. George recognises his son's need to play soccer as a way of assuaging his masculinity.

Nick Polides's journey of maturation in both play and film is a conventional one. At the beginning of the film he accords with the troubled defiant adolescent stereotype made popular in a myriad of films such *West Side Story* (1961) and *The Breakfast Club* (1985). Polides, despite his surliness and quick temper demonstrates his sensitive and responsible side by assuming a parental role in the care of his younger sister. His leadership skills are displayed when he manages to convince the school authorities to offer soccer as an official competitive school sport option. Polides assumes the role of mentor during the roller-blading scene with Christina and his position as an Alpha –male in a hierarchy of ethnic students in the multicultural inner-city school endows him with sexual knowingness and prowess. Polides is proud of his ethnic heritage but abides by the Australian doctrine of egalitarianism by actively defending his beliefs, albeit through intimidating physical force and violence. Polides also rebels against the patriarchal order as represented by his father and the school sport master to

contest the mantle of adult manhood. For him, this aligns with his heterosexual coupling with a woman five years his senior as well as with his prowess in the sporting arena. At the conclusion of the film, Polides reunites with his father, more or less as equals, and embarks on the next stage of his self-realisation journey as an adult man.

Although Polides never comes into direct contact with Christina's fiancé, Dimitri, a man ten years older than he, the two Greek men are distinguished socially through costuming. Dimitri is dressed very conservatively, routinely in a suit and tie, as befitting his middle-class conservative status and his political aspirations. In this way, the film suggests that Dimitri's class allegiance is more important to him than his ethnic identity. Nick, on the other hand, when not playing soccer, is dressed more casually, most typically in track suits, tight t-shirts – to highlight his musculature – and a flannelette shirt, used as a metonym of his 'working-class' status, and the spirit of defiance contained therein. This contrast within two modes of ethnic masculinity is yet another way in which the film adaptation favours a traditional manifestation of masculinity which is associated with a working-class ethos.

By magnifying the controversial issue of the teacher/student relationship into a sexual one that crosses professional and legal boundaries, the Jenkins adaptation unfortunately aligns this taboo issue with multicultural Australia.[88] The mainstream audience of the film may be excused for thinking that such behaviours are confined to the ethnic margins of society and hence are not part of the 'white Australian' world. Consequently, the exploration of multicultural diversity of the film, which goes to great lengths to create a veneer of verisimilitude, can be seen as an attempt by mainstream society to maintain the status quo as

[88] A number of Australian films have dealt with teachers and students including *Picnic at Hanging Rock, Wake in Fright, The Devil's Playground, The Mango Tree, The Getting of Wisdom, Flirting, The Year My Voice Broke, Puberty Blues, Moving Out, Looking for Alibrandi, Fast Talking, Only the Brave*, *Shine*, *Dead Heart*, *My Mother Frank*, and *Hey, Hey, It's Esther Blueburger* but Jenkin's *Heartbreak Kid* is the only one to represent inappropriate sexual liaisons between them, although this is strongly suggested in *Descant for Gossips*.

suggested by Hage (201); that is, to keep ethnic Australians within a certain periphery in society.

Appropriating ethnicity

In contrast to the discussion above that dealt with coming of age through ethnicity, another way in which ethnic masculinity manifests itself in Australian screen adaptations involves the manner in which this is used as a way of privileging the Anglo-Celtic characters. Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, writing about American film, observes that even though a number of films do focus on racial communities and multicultural issues, they do so in a way that advantages the dominant members of society, which routinely involves the development of white characters. His observation, specifically, that in such films "it is the dominants' learning process, rather than the culture from which they are learning, that is the focus of interest" (137) resonates equally in Australian adaptations such as *Strictly Ballroom* and *Death in Brunswick* (1990). Together the two adaptations become exemplars of cultural appropriation.

The appropriating of ethnicity to benefit others is shown on a personal level through the character of Scott Hastings in Baz Luhrmann's panegyric *Strictly Ballroom* and to a lesser extent in *Death in Brunswick*.[89] *Strictly Ballroom* presents the ethnic man as a recalibrator of Australian normative insipid masculinity, which is also echoed in *Death in Brunswick*. The contrast between the two father-figures available to Hastings in *Strictly Ballroom* are telling. Hastings's biological father is insipid, dominated by his wife and cowers before the supremacy of the male hegemonic order, represented by Barry Fife, the scheming president of the Australian Dancing Federation. Contrastingly Rico, Fran's father, is a

[89] The discussion on cultural appropriate and *Death in Brunswick* was deleted due to the length of the thesis.

swarthy confident Latino whose guidance, fiery demeanour and masculine agency are used to complete Scott's heroic journey for self-realisation.[90]

Rico, played by Antonio Vargas, first appeared in the third iteration of the stage play of *Strictly Ballroom* which was commissioned to mark Australia's bicentennial celebrations in 1988. The inclusion of a multicultural dimension in the work is unsurprising, given the agenda of inclusivity that surrounded the bicentennial celebrations. Rico, first appears in the film adaptation as a solemn character whose otherness is denoted through his physicality, gesturality and costume. His unshaven face marks him as a marginalised character, an authoritarian father who forbids his daughter, Fran, from colluding with outsiders, such as the Anglo-Celtic Scott Hastings.[91] Rico's enactment of a Latino masculinity is intertextually connected with the notion of a passionate Latino lover promulgated in various art-house films, such as Pedro Almodóvar's *Matador*, and particularly though ballroom dancing. Rico is also dressed in black, in contrast to the whiteness of his protégé, which prompts Rose Chaffey to record that Rico "is represented as a stereotype of an immigrant" (184). This is supported by the film's first shot of Rico which locates him in a marginal position, fused with the nocturnal shadows. When he assertively demonstrates his mastery of the *paso doble*, however, the film's camerawork marks a distinct change in how the camera records Rico. He is shown in an extreme close-up that reveals his pride and, as James Bennett observes, this "gives way to a longer shot showing his domination of the space and Scott's displacement to the edge of the screen" (72).

[90] Even though the Anglo-Celtic characters both in the play and the film adaptation of *Strictly Ballroom* are provided with surnames, the three main ethnic characters, Fran, Rico and Ya Ya are not.
[91] This is long before an unshaven appearance became synonymous with designer stubble.

This ironic inversion is doubly informative for the audience. It firstly signals that ethnic minorities belong in the Australian psyche and physical space and are not merely exilic beings. Secondly, it informs the audience that it is the mainstream Anglo-Celtic white males who need to successful ingratiate themselves into the migrant homosocial order. The strong and proud Rico initiates Scott into the authentic rhythm of the *paso doble* which appears inseparable from macho masculinity, and in so doing, assumes the role of a mentor and father-substitute, even though the subtext of primitivism implied by the film may unsettle some audiences. John Champagne observes that through a series of eyeline matches, the film shows Scott's admiration for the father's dancing abilities (74).

Fig. 49. Appropriating ethnicity can be used subtly as a way of activating meaning. Here Vince Colosimo, an Australian actor of Italian heritage has been cast as the corrupt and maleficent Chief Superintendent Jack Rizzolli, an Australian of Italian ancestry in season 1 of the miniseries, *Janet King,* adapted from the ABC miniseries *Crownies*.

With its binary rhythm, the dance, in its current popular permutation, is associated with bullfighting and the kind of masculinity displayed by the matador. Particularly, "the bullfighters' bravado exemplified their bodily performance of machismo. Such machismo was regarded by many as an expression of national pride" (Zanardi 199). In this manner, Rico bestows a type of phallicism onto Scott, which then in turn, enables the latter to adopt a more potent physicality in his dancing, allowing him to win the coveted prize (Buchbinder *Performance* 63).

The cultural clash at the core of the film constitutes a challenge to the hegemonic masculine order through using the agency of marginalised masculinity. This is presented as a contest between ontological bodies and authentic performativity. The depilated body of Scott's dancing competitor, the dipsomaniacal Ken Railings, is communicated as inauthentic in various segments. The bulging bodies of Les Kendall and Barry Fife are both categorised within the Silenus-type and the body of Scott's father is presented as feeble and decrepit. In contrast, Rico's body is lithe, finely muscled and disciplined; having such an authentic and idealised body becomes emblematic of having the most authentic culture as argued by Jeanette Hoorn (172). Through the ethnic character of Rico and his family, Luhrmann's film presents a serious challenge to Australia's myth of a white monocultural settler nation. Seen from this perspective, Scott's accomplished performance at the conclusion of *Strictly Ballroom* is "an affirmation of cultural diversity" (Cook 45), even though this is carried out through cultural appropriation.

Strictly Ballroom focusses on how ethnic masculinity can revitalise more dominant and Anglo-Celtic enactments of masculinity; a type of blueprint for effective multiculturalism. Nonetheless, the film "makes profound criticisms of hegemonic masculinity and

demonstrates that unitary notions of masculinity in a multicultural society are inadequate" (Butterss 92).

Ethnic comedies and Wogsploitation

Nearly all characters examined in the screen adaptations in this forty-year period can be located within an Australian postcolonial ethnic identity that emphasizes an identity formed as 'the other' within the host country, as argued by Toby Miller (16). Ghassan Hage positions this strategically by claiming that even when members of various ethnic communities appear on the Australian screen in a sympathetic light, they are still positioned in specific ways so they can be just "valued and tolerated" (95). *Red Dog* provides an apt example here where the Italian émigré Vanno is valued as a fellow member of this isolated homosocial community but his behaviour is monitored by the more dominant members of the mining fraternity. Vanno's ruminations on the glory of his native town of Abruzzi has infuriated all his workers equally but it is Sandanski who mutters in Polish, "if he mentions that stupid town one more time I'll stick him like a pig" (00:12:52) before he proceeds to attack Vanno, aided by Dzamanski and Chuposki. Following this melee, it is the white 'bloke' Peeto, who bluntly tells Vanno, "We took a vote and the shop steward agrees, if you don't stop talking about Braski [sic], the ski patrol have permission to slit your throat" (13:22). [92] This entitlement, as performed by an Anglo-Celtic man, stems from an assumption of hegemonic superiority in what constitutes Australian male identity (Bennett 70). Interestingly enough, the white man delegates the possibility of homicide to his ethnic co-workers which can be seen as naturalising violence within multicultural communities.

[92] Referring to the suffix in the surnames of Sandanski, Dzamanski and Chuposki.

Vanno, one of the aspiring owners of the titular canine in *Red Dog*, is an embodiment of the average working-class battler ethos which is notably different from the cinematic prototype of Nino Culluto in *They're a Weird Mob*. There, the 'otherness' of the Italian émigré was accentuated by his white-collar profession of journalism and juxtaposed starkly with the working-class ocker guides who had to initiate him into becoming an Australian. That is, foregoing his white-collar job as a journalist and embracing a new working-mode, associated with the 'averageness' of the working-class battler-cum-larrikin. It is only after Nino accepts his new identity that he is rewarded with the patriarchal dividend through his coupling with the idealised figure of Claire Kelly. Ironically, Claire's father is a wealthy entrepreneur, which would align him within the realm of the global hegemon, who owns the business in which Nino works.

Multiculturalism in *Red Dog* might be sparse and stereotypical but it is nonetheless present. The miners, working for Hamersley Iron, hail from all parts of the globe as declared in broken English by the Italian worker Vanno, "they come from everywhere, from all the countries they come, for the money, for the work, from Poland, New Zealand, Ireland, Greece, Latvia, America even Melbourne. Living together, eating together and crapping together" (Stenders 2011).

The film adaptation of *Red Dog* is a laconic paean to Australian masculinity which retrospectively includes a strong multicultural component onto the national narrative. When Red Dog dies at the end of the narrative, "only Vanno cried, because he was Italian, and that was all right in Italy, so no-one could lay any blame" (de Bernières 113). The fact that Vanno is allowed to grieve openly, in the novella, reinforces the notion of the ethnic male as an over-emotional being who cannot curtail his feelings. This stereotype is subverted, however, in the film adaptation, where Vanno remains sombre

but in control of his emotions as he comforts his wife and child. The open grieving of the novella is now transferred onto the character of Nancy.

Contrastingly, *The Wog Boy* and *Fat Pizza* (2003) are two comedic adaptations that situate their various ethnic characters, Greek, Italian, Maltese and Lebanese, not at the periphery of assimilationist society but at the core of the narrative. Lesley Speed has identified such adaptations as part of the "wogsploitation" genre (138) that both affirms the status of the traditional Aussie ocker but also emphasises the agency of ethnic identity in a multicultural society. The popular and financial success of such comedies results in them having a role in appropriating and reconfiguring the Australian archetype of the working-class larrikin. Felicity Collins supports this, claiming that wogsploitation films resonate with audiences because "they tap into a long standing national type without disturbing its key characteristics" (73).

As argued in Chapter 2, the titular protagonist of Vellis's film, *The Wog Boy*, is an archetypal Australian larrikin who celebrates a lackadaisical work attitude, evidenced by this line in the text, "You're in the Public Service now, you're not supposed to do anything" (42:10). The enactment of ethnic masculinity, despite its exoticism, brashness and pugnacity, is aligned within the tradition of "aggressively hedonistic masculinity" (Collins "Wogboys" 82), exemplified by Mick Dundee. This intertextual positioning is one of the reasons why 'wogboys' films that use the prototype of the working-class battler at their narrative core have enjoyed considerable popular and financial success. In *The Wog Boy,* Derryn Hinch declares to Karamitsis, "you're a little Aussie battler, trying to do your best in a hard, cold world" (29:39). This collocation of the battler with the male protagonists of wog comedies can be used to support the notion that the enactment of masculinity is not intransigent but fluid and relational. Referenced by their broad

Australian accent, intonation, use of Australian colloquialism and profanities, comic characters such as Steve Karamitsis and Pauly Fenech are the cinematic successors of Barry Mackenzie and Mick Dundee.

Furthermore, the designation of the working-class battler with the working-class ocker prototype can exemplify the organic nature of the hegemonic framework of masculinity. The visibility and rambunctiousness of ethnic characters can no longer be contained on the margins of society but are assuming a more central position and becoming synonymous with parallel Anglo-Celtic characters whilst maintaining their distinct ethnicity; this in itself marking a historical shift. In this way, what is considered hegemonic in contemporary Australian masculinity can be seen outside the auspice of a monocultural bourgeois elite, obsessed with notions of propriety and can be located within the exaltation of the various guises of the working-class battler. Australian men from ethnic backgrounds who feel marginalised in Australian society for a host of socio-historical and economic reasons develop coping mechanisms to assert their own sense of worth. For ethnic men, it is partly through the assumption of a compensatory masculinity, a term coined by Karen Pyke in her examination of class distinctions and masculinities. She writes that men from a marginalised background "compensate for their demeaned status, pump up their sense of self-worth and control, and simulate the uncontested privileges" associated with hegemonic masculinity (544). Compensatory masculinity, as related more overtly to race, in Australian adaptations such as *The Heartbreak Kid* or *The Wog Boy*, refers to the amplification of masculinity, such as employing a cool bravado or an embellished swagger, evidenced through gesturality, costume, language, discourse or an overinflated emphasis on ethnocentricity, as a distinct form of identity that challenges hegemonic masculinities. This form of compensatory

masculinity can be seen as a direct challenge to the marginalised status previously assigned to 'multi-cultural' men. In Vellis's film both Greek-Australian Steve (Giannopoulos) and his best mate, Italo-Australian Frank (Colosimo) both maintain and relish their ethnic heritage and try to emulate their idol, Tony Manero, played by John Travolta, in *Saturday Night Fever*; shown in an intertextual homage during one of the film's comical sequences.[93] Like Manero, "the biggest wog of them all" (4:03) both young men are meticulous about their appearance and grooming – flaunt their athletic physiques, particularly Frank in tight fitting costumes – and are exceptional disco dancers.

Similarly, in *Fat Pizza* (2003), male vulnerability is obfuscated by exterior toughness, most evidenced by intense muscularity and self-professed sexual prowess which is 'accredited and witnessed' by fellow men. Locality, specifically the banality of suburbia, is instrumental in mediating the formation of masculinity as is the relational notion of otherness. Protest masculinity, according to Connell, is seen as part of 'the exaggerated claim to potency that European culture attaches to masculinity' (*Masculinities* 111) and it can be considered a challenge to dominant hegemonic masculinity because it deprives men in various subcultures the benefits which are afforded by privileged masculinities.

[93] The film, directed by John Badham, was a commercial and critical success for Paramount Pictures. It was adapted from a feature article, "Tribal Rites of the New Saturday Night" by British writer Nik Cohn for the *New York* magazine.

Fig. 50. Ethnic Australian men are routinely cast as criminals as shown by Vince Colosimo's roles as real-life criminal, Neville Bartos, in *Chopper* and as Alphonse Gangitano in *Underbelly*.

As shown in *The Wog Boy*, Steve, Frank and their associates, all of whom live on the periphery of mainstream society, being a non-Anglo-Celtic white Australian is tantamount to a "protest or site of resistance in an attempt to reverse the hierarchical dualism of Anglo/ethnic" (Martino and Palotta-Chiarolli 103).

Felicity Collins claims that the revival carnivalesque, evident in *The Wog Boy* is a reaction to the conservatism of the Howard years in Australia (76). Tony Moore, however, goes a step further and concludes his argument about Australian ocker comedies by stating that "the Anglo-Celts lost their monopoly on larrikinism in the 1990s when wog humour emerged from the suburbs with the stage shows *Wogs Out of Work*" (71). The subversive element in *The Wog Boy* manifests itself through the refusal of the lead character, Steve Karamitsos, to remain impassive, invisible and entrapped in mainstream society. The cultural ghettoes of community centres, churches, fast-food restaurants and discos can no longer confine the new generation of ethnic young men as it did their parents in the era of assimilation. Collins observes that Karamitsos's transgressiveness is associated with his aim of appropriating public spaces that were previously the assumed natural habitat of Anglo-Celtic Australians such as the world of the media, the public service, politics and the business world ("Wogboy" 79). Although writing before the release of this film, Hage describes such an action as an "Australian ethnic will" (103) that challenges Anglo-Celtic hegemonic dominance.

Protest masculinities and ethnicity.

The myth of the white Australian referenced in the previous section also underpins the discussion of protest masculinity and ethnicity. To better appreciate the protest masculinity enacted by ethnic-Australian men, it is necessary to contextualise the socio-

cultural zone where such a protest takes place. Terry Goldie has written of "the impossible necessity of becoming indigenous" (13), of truly belonging to Australia, when describing settler colonialism that provided the prototype for the Australian masculinity of the battler. Graham Huggan identifies settler colonialism and the encroachment of capitalist globalism as contributing factors to how racial antagonism is produced and disseminated in Australian society (vi). The documentary *Cronulla Riots: The Day that Shocked the Nation* (2013)*,* adapted from real events and their reporting in the media, traces the fissures in Australia's mythic nationalism that is connected to a white origin. Cornel West views the various ruptures of social order in multicultural Australia as part of a relational hegemonic framework where Australians from different, often competing, racial backgrounds, are vying for supremacy and ownership of 'Australian identity'. He warns that "enforced racial hierarchy dooms us as a nation to collective paranoia and hysteria" which he views as the unmaking of democratic order (8).

The Sound of One Hand Clapping (1998)*, Head On,* and *Romper Stomper* are 'postcolonial ethnic' films exploring the lives of first and second generation migrants in Australia. They also provide an apt opportunity to explore the unstable and problematic nature of categories within the hegemonic masculinity framework. Flanagan's protagonist, Bojan Buloh, despite his valiant effort, finds it impossible to be accepted in the post-war assimilationist context of Australia. Ari, the alienated and uncompromising protagonist of the *Loaded/Head On* intertexts, embodies the agency of ethnic marginalised groups, while the contestation of the suburban space between the two distinct gangs in *Romper Stomper* calls into question the stigmatisation of 'the other' and how race continues to function in a normative manner. Interestingly enough, through the auspice of protest

masculinities, all three texts challenge the institution of mateship which in Australian society, and particular cinema, is routinely communicated as being sacrosanct.

The adaptation of Richard Flanagan's *The Sound of One Hand Clapping* (1998) presents the audience with the opportunity to scrutinise the presentation of a working-class ethnic man's masculinity in the assimilationist era in Australian history. As Adi Wimmer notes, the Flanagan adaptation speculates what the historiography of post-war Australia would be like without the contribution of low-paid immigrant labour (132). Even though, as proposed throughout this work, a working-class masculinity is perceived as an idealised state for men in Australia, this alone, judging by the experiences of Flanagan's protagonist Bojan Buloh, cannot guarantee acceptance in the unwelcoming land of Australia. Buloh's assignation as a working-class man is established very early in the film adaptation through the archival footage of the migrant workers constructing the water storage dam in central Tasmania. Such working-class men are called "reffos" and constitute Buloh's fellow displaced workers from various European countries who have migrated to Australia following the dire economic conditions of post-war Europe. Zora Simic claims the strength of *The Sound of One Hand Clapping* lies in its willingness to examine the personal and social context confronted by migrant men in their adopted home, "amidst the pressures of migration, labour contracts in isolated parts of Australia and residual trauma from war and its aftermath" (170).

The most poignant representation of masculinity as a site of ambivalence and vulnerability in this adaptation occurs at the naturalisation ceremony for new Australians, where Buloh is nursing his young daughter and is unable to stop crying, whilst the white man officiating the ceremony, intones to Buloh and his fellow new inductees with no sense of irony that, "the great gift of *English* civilisation, is the English language, and [the]

belief in justice and fair play" (44). This scene which is repeated in the film identifies the two elements which rob Buloh of the dividend and kudos that is normally reserved for working-class battlers: he does not have an effective command of the language and nor is he treated in a fair or just way by others in this new country. He tells his young daughter, "you and I have no home, Sonja…Don't you understand? (...) We have a wog flat, my Sonja. A wog flat" (Flanagan "One" 232). Buloh's desire for a home remains an urgent need throughout the narrative:

> They simply wanted a world that might be ordered with the hope that the order might last long enough to build a home and raise a family and have them in turn bring their children back, and then to die knowing one had as much as one could rightfully expect out of life without having to suffer cataclysmic wars, occupations, revolutions, destruction of homes, cities, nations, countries, languages, peoples (Flanagan 116).

According to Flanagan, who also directed the film, Buloh's sense of powerlessness in the film relates to his inability to feel proficient in the English language, and his English, as a result, becomes incredibly violent and profane in the same way that his physical behaviour becomes violent. ("A conversation" 120). The novel describes Buloh's relationship to the English language, akin to: "an insufferable swamp (..) through which he had made his long, awkward way in a rude raft constructed of a few straggly branches of phrases he had torn from a scrubby tree here and there" (182).

In the spirit of assimilationist politics that captured the social ethos of the time, Buloh is adamant, that to be able to succeed in Australia, he must not only try to always speak English but he must stop communicating in Slovenian altogether. Although Tony Simoes

de Silva does not use the actual word hegemony, this is what he implies, when he explores the cost that a host nation exacts on its new migrants, viewing them "as safe and pliable… ready for the process of cultural inscription" (55). Buloh, despite the vexing set of circumstances he finds himself in, is not readily a likeable character. He is a domineering patriarch himself, who is sullen, friendless, drinks too much and, on occasions, is physically abusive towards his only daughter, Sonja. What ultimately redeems him is his decision to sober up and to resume carpentry, reawakening his lost identity as a working-class man. At the conclusion of the narrative he decides to reconcile with his estranged daughter and "very humbly he offers a hand-crafted, hand-painted cot, baby cradle, and a high chair" (Wimmer 140).

Graham Huggan views the construction of racial or ethnic identity in a nuanced manner, beyond simplistic boundaries. He writes that racism "is an effect of the complex transnational network of capitalist-inspired social relations that structures our contemporary world" (vi). Such capitalist-inspired social relations are at the heart of *Romper Stomper*. The conflict enacted in *Romper Stomper* is between two competing 'gangs' attempting to carve out a space for themselves in inner-city Melbourne in the early 1990s. Prophetically, the year of the film's release is also the year that Katherine Brisbane identifies as one when multiculturalism gave way to anxiety, as refugee arrivals began to increase (409). Hendo's skinhead gang commits despicable acts of racially-motivated violence against members of the Melbourne Vietnamese community and his character is utilised consciously "as a clarion call for white racial supremacy, and resistance to miscegenation" (Quinn 6). For psychopathic Hendo, played by Russell Crowe in a career-defining role, the hard-working immigrants who populate present-day Australia

are expendable, as shown by his callous strangulation of the petrol attendant during his ill-fated escape bid to Adelaide.

Through forcing the audience to adopt the gaze of the skinheads, *Romper Stomper* revives the fear of White Australia about a possible displacement from an Asian invasion only to have this obliterated by the film's cathartic dénouement. The derision and contempt that the skinheads feel for ethnic minorities is palpable and demonstrated in the opening scene which graphically shows an unprovoked attack on a trio of youths. During this attack, the skinhead leader, engulfed by fury, accompanied by John Clifford White's ominous score, screams at his victims, "this is our place gook boy, our place." In Hendo's racist vitriol, the Vietnamese community are referred to as "filthy fuckin' slope head scum!" (8:06)

The blistering anger displayed by Hendo's gang is unleashed, mainly, against the Vietnamese immigrants but it is also directed against women and gays at several junctures in the film. In this way, director Geoffrey Wright demonstrates the pervasiveness of violence associated with protest masculinities, particularly as it arises from disenfranchised groups of men within the community who wish to contest hegemonic masculinity as part of their delusional entitlement. Membership in Hendo's gang is akin to mateship and is predicated upon a masculinist domination that is sustained through the externalisation of violence (Lucas 143).

The conflict in the film is illustrated through the extended motifs of journeying and family belonging. Rochelle Siemienowicz writes:

> the history of Australian national cinema is one of visually claiming the nation as our own, of depicting the history, the landscape and the people in such a way as

> to take possession of them; of allowing a sense of being at home in a place, where there is ambivalence about our right to feel at home (49).

We first encounter a trio of Vietnamese youths on a journey through the nocturnal city landscape where the unsubtitled diegetic Vietnamese dialogue immediately communicates to the audience that the youths clearly feel a sense of belonging in their urban setting. In fact, the sense of belonging of ethnic communities to the suburban environment is disclosed in nearly all adaptations examined and reminds audiences that ethnic representation is not associated with the spirit of the Outback, which occupies such a privileged position in the Australian psyche[94]. The trio of Vietnamese youths are attacked by the marauding gang of Hendo's skinheads in a railway pedestrian underpass and this scene introduces the main drama of the film; that is, the demonisation of an ethnic minority as a pestilent intrusion in Australian life.

Romper Stomper does utilise the contentious trope associated with a 'Vietnamese gang', which Scott Brook reminds was "sensationalised in the tabloid media during the 1980s and which resurfaced in the late 1990s" (288), as a type of narrative shorthand, since the film is enacted from the point of view of the skinheads. The film, however, simultaneously debunks many of the negative preconceptions of 'Vietnamese gangs' since this is shown to be merely a code for group identity and belonging that can afford protection against the onslaught of racist attacks. The Vietnamese who bear the brunt of the skinhead attacks are making a constructive contribution to society and are on an economic upward trajectory which only exacerbates the anger of Hendo's gang who are homeless, alienated, and unemployable. Phillip Butterss explains, "the Vietnamese work

[94] I have examined sixty-five screen adaptations as part of this thesis that include some facet of ethnic representation. The Australian-born Afghan camel handler in *Tracks*, Sallay Mohomet, appears to be the only one at ease in his environment, the mythic Outback.

in restaurants or factories and are able to buy houses and pubs, while the skins are all on the dole" ("Masculinity" 43). The first encounter between the competing gangs in the film demonstrates the dominant position of Hendo's gang; however, the second extended encounter reverses this. Karl Quinn records that the action of Hendo's skinheads, "is in fact a rear-guard stance against an inevitable tide of change" (6).

The challenge of the Vietnamese community to their marginalised status is subtly communicated in the film through the trope of the family and how this is connected to economic advantage but also how it upholds patriarchal values. The greatest contribution of *Romper Stomper* to Australian sociocultural history is that it presents the Vietnamese community as active participants in Australia's everyday multiculturalism, as noted by Tony Mitchell (219). The Vietnamese people are presented as industrious, disciplined, responsible citizens who espouse unbreakable bonds to familial and communal structures. This is glimpsed in the scenes in factories and restaurants where the Vietnamese are working and socialising. It is also evidenced by Mr Nguyen, played by Tri Phan, who buys the dilapidated pub, frequented by the skinheads, as a business venture for his sons. In fact, it is the possession of space, that is the pub, that escalates the conflict between the two warring sides. As argued earlier in the work, the pub enjoys a hallowed position in Australian cinematic history as the zone in which working-class masculinity is routinely performed. Its purchase by Vietnamese migrants symbolise an affront to the entitlement of white men, who in the perception of Hendo and his gang, are the authentic Australians.

Romper Stomper displaces society's racism by projecting it onto a detestable outgroup, Hendo's skinheads, which, as Butterss argues, exonerates mainstream society from any feelings of racism (45). This is supported by the condemnation of racism by the cathartic

conclusion of the narrative through the graphic demise of the racist Hendo, which is, fascinatingly enough, witnessed by a group of Japanese tourists. This coda reminds the audience that the conflict between ethnic communities may occur at the regional level but that it can have ramifications within a competitive consumerist global context as well. The global manifestation of racism and xenophobia, as explored in *Romper Stomper*, and to a lesser degree the *Wolf Creek* franchise, discloses the perennial "fear of the exterior and external invasion", as Rebecca Coyle cautions, which reverberates in a number of literary and screen texts (106).

The *Head On/Loaded* intertexts document a particular juncture in the life of angry protagonist, Ari, who having failed school, hovers on the margins of working-class Melbourne. James Bennett notes that all grunge tales involving masculinity are enacted "with a concern to depict an angry, ahistorical, amoral diegesis" (63). In this way Kokkinos' film, like the Tsiolkas novel before it, adopts a similar approach to ethnicity in Australia, in regards to the performance of angry masculinity as does, *Romper Stomper*, filmed two years earlier. The "deep-seated sense of ontological dis-ease" has been a perennial trope in Australian literature (Huggan viii) and is explored fully in the *Head On/Loaded* intertexts through the entrapment and disorientation of their protagonist, Ari. Joe, one of Ari's closest friends, urges him to assume more responsibility in his life, but his disappointment in the film is more focussed on Ari's dismissal of heteronormative values, than on issues pertaining to class ideology, as is the case in the novel. Joe feels affronted that Ari is so contemptuous of his forthcoming marriage, which the latter views as a betrayal of the homosocial order. Vernay views Ari's refusal to categorise himself sexually as indicative of his "confused ideological stance" (42) whereas Julia Hallam views Ari's journey into manhood interrupted by displacement and alienation

within the more global context of economic restructuring, more so, than in terms of ethnic cultural confusion (184).

One of the remarkable aspects of this adaptation is its defiance against a life-affirming dénouement, or "good multiculturalism", as Bennett phrases it in his analysis (71). Ari doesn't reconcile with his patriarchal and oppressive father but nor does he allow himself to become a reformed lover when the opportunity arises through his attraction to Sean and the latter's liberalism.[95] The core of the narrative in the adaptation intertexts remains intact as an androcentric denunciation of ethno-heteronormativity, fused with a queer sensibility. Through the refusal to be aligned with a subordinated form of masculinity, Ari's defiance and protest is made apparent.

Joan Kirby suggests that Ari clings onto the notion of an unchallengeable masculinity as a way of protecting himself from the pressures to confirm to traditional notions of duty and responsibility as a young ethnic man. She adds: "the attempt to substitute a Dionysian subjectivity for communal ties, intimacies and obligations results in an unwanted reification of the macho masculinity the text elsewhere challenges" (14). Ari leads a hedonistic life which is presented as a reaction of his protest masculinity. This hedonism is not only associated with his homosexual proclivities but it can also be seen as a viable alternative to his confusion as regards his double ethnicity as well as a reaction to the new community context of alienation and unemployment brought about by capitalism (Conomos 122). Even though he may not be able to articulate it clearly, Ari's disenfranchisement against the culturally atrophied world of his parents is a protest about the precarious situation he finds himself in as a young Greek man growing into

[95] Bennett observes that this is explicated through the mise-en-scène in Sean's room (74). For example, the prominent position of the 'March Against Racism' poster.

adulthood in Australia. He lacks the support that is the entitlement of countless other heterosexual men, like his older brother and to a lesser extent, his friend George. But Ari also inhabits a precarious economic world. The full employment that necessitated the post-war migration in Australia, highlighted by the director's stunning opening monochromatic montage, is no longer an economic reality for Ari, who faces an uncertain future, living on the margins of society. Ari is primarily atomistic in all carnal contacts, displaying an uncompromised individuality which is, "the lynch pin of masculinity" (Williams and Gardener 47). His double marginalisation, on account of his ethnicity and homosexuality, prompt his friend Johnny/Toula to call him Persephone, after the mythological maiden who also lived a double life.

The backyard garden that Ari's father tends with care, has become a cinematic trope in Australian film to denote ethnicity and a masculinist zone, due to its utilisation in so many screen texts including *Looking for Alibrandi* and *The Slap*. Gardening, as a cultural pursuit, is not only connected to the agrarian life, familiar to many of the migrants who came to Australia since the 1950s, but it is also an economic necessity, as a way of supplementing the family income. Given the assimilationist socio-political prevailing conditions in Australia before the embracing of multiculturalism, gardening was also a defiant stance against the Anglo-Celtic identity that is metonymically associated with the suburban yard and its green lawn. In this manner, Ari's absence from the 'garden' is a subtle sign of his status as an outcast in the homosocial order of ethnic men.

Carnivalesque is a trope derived from the work of the Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin, that can be employed to describe exactly where Ari is at the end of the narrative in the intertexts. The inversion, ambivalence, and excess as well as the preoccupation with the body and its reproductive functions, are all associative qualities with Bakhtin's

theory as Michael B. Goodman claims (249) and it is precisely what we encounter in this end scene and also throughout much of *Head On*. There is chaos aplenty in his interactions with a host of other men, including his father, brother, best friend George, rejected lover Sean, his sexual male conquests and his best friend Toula/Johnny, all of whom want him to assume a liberal, recognisable category in how he performs his masculinity. Felicity Plunkett observes that "the reiteration of familiar stereotypes can be seen as shoring-up against the anxiety that more sophisticated representations can generate" (41). The liberating aspect of the carnivalesque is best appreciated in the intertexts, but particularly in the film, by Toula, whose role has been expanded substantially in the adaptation process. S/he assumes the role of a sidekick in a bromance and demonstrates how the assumptions of a hegemonic society can be subverted through humour and chaos, in the spirit of Bakhtin.

The conclusion of the narrative celebrates "Ari's life in the bloom of its irreconcilability" (Jorgensen 150) because in his defiance and protest, Ari is negating both the sexual politics of his friend Toula as well as the political activism of his father (Hardwick "Wander Lust" 40). Plunkett, eloquently asserts:

> instead of despair and abnegation, there is hedonism and violence in this beautiful, chilling and ambivalent moment. There is an unshakeable, utterly compelling assertion of self, of the 'I', in all its complication and multifariousness. (47)

Jorgensen proposes that the social realist mode, evident in so many Australian adaptations in the 1990s, including *Head On*, was part of a larger global movement leaving men to oscillate between "displacement and ambition, hopelessness and hope"

(148) Hallam comments that masculine identities have been adversely impacted by changes in global economies, which left them marginalised, disenfranchised and impotent (184). Marginalisation and disenfranchisement are indeed the states that confront Ari at the conclusion of *Head On*.

Economic prosperity and ethnicity

This final section of the chapter examines the representation of ethnic Australian men outside the archetypal working-class battler model. Martin Shaw argues that a number of often contradictory fields of social relations exist in global, national, and local contexts (32). *Looking for Alibrandi* allows the audience to witness the class transformation of the character of Michael Andretti, played by Anthony LaPaglia. Once aligned with the marginalised masculinity of the working-class 'boy-next-door archetype', his success has enabled him to lead a more prosperous and successful life. Andretti is represented as a powerful hegemon whose wealth and legal expertise allows him to become his daughter's rescuer, when the latter is involved in a contretemps at school. Even though Andretti too hails from an ethnic background, his societal status, as signified by his costume, gesturality and through the mise-en-scène in his exclusive Milson's Point apartment, juxtaposes him with the working-class origins of his daughter.

The tension, anxieties and alienation that plague the post-Howard Australian middle-class is made more transparent in the adaptation of *The Slap*, a text "that tries to be Australian and not traditionally British or Irish derivative written by an Australian" (Bonnici 121). At first glance, the representation of masculinity in *The Slap* intertexts can be viewed as positive and progressive. Previously marginalised and silenced characters such as Hector, Harry, Van, Ali and Manolis, who typically performed minor roles, if

any, in earlier Australian screen adaptations preoccupied with "traditionally white-bread characters" (Falconer 24), now assume a dominant position in the narrative. The assumption of the mainstream public space and conscience is evidence that their previously status of marginalised masculinity no longer holds true. Nonetheless, the male characters in *The Slap*, "seem to simmer with suppressed rage, resentment or bewilderment" (Hawker 58).

The Slap goes beyond the usual preoccupations of the subordination, and inherent disadvantage of ethnic men and presents them as ordinary Australians anxious about their

Fig. 51. Vince Colosimo as Mike Cundall, the nefarious, and economically prosperous, property developer, in the adaptation of *Jack Irish: Dead Point*. Often through casting, producers are able to appropriate and explore the misconceptions of audiences and imbue their screen construct with a certain ideological agenda. The Peter Temple novel does not specify the ethnic/racial background of Mike Cundall, but through the casting of Colosimo, it could be argued the film reinforces common prejudices between racial identity and criminality.

relational social status. The suburban lives enacted in *The Slap* intertexts are set in the gentrified Melbourne northern suburbs. As Hawker notes, "the new Australian bourgeoisie upwardly mobile and professional, is no longer necessarily white and Anglo-Saxon" (58). Melbourne, as depicted in the intertexts, is "where ethnic groups concentrate, how sexualities coalesce in localities, and where sex and drugs are available in a variety of forms" (Treagus 1). *The Slap* was produced in the dying days of the Howard government, known partly for its avowed ethics of class inclusion and the embracing of aspirational voters such as Harry, who according to the author "was rolling in money, riding the seemingly endless wave of economic boom" (32).

The central episode of the adaptation, as noted in its title, becomes a site of contestation between different enactments of masculinity. A working-class masculinity embodied by the alcoholic Gary, and the virtuous Terry and a middle-class aspirational masculinity represented by Harry and to a lesser extent, his cousin Hector. Harry, the embodiment of narcissism and machismo, has elevated himself from his working-class status to the life of the bourgeoisie as noted by his impressive seaside mansion. Harry's economic prosperity entrenches his entitlement of patriarchal power and feelings of superiority as shown through his interactions at work and at home. In a moment of rare reflection he confides to his cousin, "we got it good. Just think about how fucking good we've got it" (*The Slap* 124). At work, Harry enacts a dominant form of masculinity that alienates and belittles others. He promises his thieving employee Con, "I'll shake hands with you when you're a man again" (*The Slap* 95) and in a later episode Harry reflects, "I wish I could fire you on the spot you butt-ugly Hindy cum-rug" when another employee asks for some time off (*The Slap* 108). His machismo and misogyny is also evident in his son, Rocco, who tells his father, "black chicks are all hos. Everyone knows that" (*The Slap*

116). Harry's smugness is only perturbed in the narrative when the police come to interview him at home, before filing charges against him. Andrew, Harry's solicitor, comments that the presence of the police at Harry's house would not be a surprise for his neighbours because, "that's what they expected to happen as soon as wogs moved into the neighbourhood" (*The Slap* 108).

Harry's bravado and narcissism is fuelled by the patriarchal dividend that is intertwined with middle-class economic prosperity. This is also shared by his cousin, Hector. The performativity of masculinity, as embodied by Harry, is interestingly enough, enacted in familiar locales such as the affluent suburban home and the workplace, making it both familiar and unsettling. Even though the usurpation of the battler archetype by ethnic men can be considered a challenge to the previously marginalised position held by men such as Harry, this cannot be considered altogether positive. This is because the type of masculinity performed by a character such as Harry can be considered misogynistic, egocentric, duplicitous, irresponsible, violent and prurient (Midalia 57). *The Slap* intertexts communicate a new incarnation of the Australian middle-class battler, whose masculinity has its roots in the old working class, as suggested by Bonnici (121). A character like Harry, after all, is a son of a migrant and he, himself, has been a blue-collar worker, repairing cars before becoming a business man. The recognisable traditional working class battler, represented by the Aboriginal character of Terry (a childhood friend of Hector's) who changed his name to Bilal after converting to Islam, moves to Daylesford.

Given the centrality of ethnic representation in the recent successful adaptations of Christos Tsiolkas's work including *The Slap* and *Barracuda* (2016), Graeme Turner's 1994 assertion that "the semiotics of Australian ethnicities and masculinities would seem to have changed" (127) appears prescient. This is also attested by contemporary period films such as *Red Dog* and the

elegiac *Romulus, My Father* (2007) which insert the contribution of migrants into the Australian collective imagination in a retrolutionary manner.[96] In *Romulus, My Father*, for example, the motley crew of migrant men no longer occupy peripheral positions in society but are the main focus of the film. Richard Roxburgh, the director of *Romulus, My Father*, recounts that the text is a "story of migration, of people transplanted and ending up in incredibly harsh conditions is really at the heart of our civilisation" (9). Similarly, Tom O'Regan also emphasises the agency of ethnic characters in his assertion that, "women, gays and ethnics [have] become the battlers – Muriel, Mitzi and Nick, thereby reinvigorating the legitimacy of Australian cinema" (160).

*

This chapter has argued that the marginalisation of Australian ethnic men has traditionally been seen in a problematic and xenophobic context. This differentiation from the normative status enjoyed by Anglo-Celtic men has led to numerous attempts to nullify 'difference' via assimilationist policies and to transform ethnic men into 'authentic' Australian men. I have argued that the adoption of the multicultural agenda has led to an acceptance of one's racial/cultural hybridity and has challenged the marginalisation hitherto ascribed to ethnic men, mainly through economic ascendancy. Furthermore, I have proposed that representations of ethnic characters in Australian screen adaptations function as both activators and concealers of meaning and I have illustrated this by the various filmic representations of actor Vince Colosimo, interspersed throughout this chapter.[97]

[96] In their appraisal of the Harry Potter franchise in *Screen Adaptations: Impure Cinema*, Cartmell and Whelehan use this word to refer to texts which "nostalgically celebrate a reimagination of the past in the present" (81).

[97] In a similar way that the casting of Bill Hunter in numerous roles signified a certain type of masculinity, it can be argued that the casting of Vince Colosimo does the same when a masculine role requires that it is embodied by someone instantly recognisable as the embodiment of ethnic hegemonic masculinity.

Conclusion

The forty-year timeframe examined in this work has enriched my understanding of representations of the enactment of masculinity in screen adaptations and has shown how these collude with, extend, complement and challenge the relational concept of hegemonic masculinities.

Australian screen adaptations locate representations of masculinity within a normative context, condone a hegemonic construction of masculinity, and disseminate these through cinematic and television language that can be understood as 'natural'. The accumulation of stories of white, heterosexual, Anglo-Celtic males in so many Australian adaptation intertexts has resulted in the privileging of a certain type of a national identity that reflects the experiences and desires of these men and excludes how others, including women, gays, migrants and Aboriginal Australians can assert their own Australianness. In this way, Australian consciousness itself is framed around a masculine identity.

Hegemony seeks to approbate the socially condoned practices enjoyed by groups of men at a particular historical juncture and, as prevailing conditions fluctuate, so do idealised enactments of masculinity. But looking back, we can clearly see, how screen representation endorsed and promoted certain types of masculinity. Screen adaptations, as cultural artefacts, demonstrate that as a pattern of practice, hegemonic masculinity can be considered normative because it embodies "the currently most honoured way of being a man" (Connell and Messerschmidt 832) and it dispels facets considered to be undesirable.

Hegemonic masculinity is the most exalted status within a hierarchy of male relations and further, central to this, is a man's physicality, manual activity, and dexterity, ideally

bestowing on the recipient a hardened, bronzed idealised body. I have argued that in the Australian context this becomes fetishized in narratives dealing with nationhood through the use of the iconic Anzac warrior. The powerful male body as a protective force has been magnified in narratives of conflict and war, particularly through the admiring and scopophilic gaze of the cinema lenses.

It is at the societal level that an idealised articulation of masculinity is constructed and disseminated, for example through the pervasive figure of the larrikin and the Anzac hero, in a plethora of screen adaptations. In such manifestations, hegemonic masculinity is disseminated as a revered form of masculinity ascribed to a man who wields considerable power in his socio-cultural context and who profits the most from such a rank.

Mateship is perceived as an idealised state in the homosocial relations of men in Australia and the pursuit of the mantle of mateship can be connected to the value of egalitarianism. Through noting some of the challenges to the privileged state of mateship, as communicated in screen adaptations, I have illustrated how the very presence of mateship can be used to disguise fissures in Australia's so-called classless society and obfuscate marked economic discrepancies. Through my discussion of defiant masculinities, often assumed through an exaggerated exercise of hegemonic masculinity by people who feel marginalised or disempowered in society, I have demonstrated how this involves the domination of others, routinely through conflict and violence and is typically motivated by insecurity and a fear of expulsion from the patriarchal and homosocial order.

As part of my research into the validity of the hegemonic framework of masculinities and how it continues to function, I have examined how Aboriginal male characters have been marginalised and identified as the other, forever acquiescing to the control and power of the Anglo-Celtic colonisers. The cultural supremacy of white people over Aboriginal men is routinely used to justify the usurpation of land, as well as the appropriation of Aboriginal women and the emasculation and relegation of Aboriginal men to the status of feminised 'other'. Both impulses, ironically, result in a reiteration of a sense of belonging for white Australians.

I have also examined the marginalisation of Australian-ethnic male characters within the framework of hegemonic masculinity in the postcolonial cultural context and concluded that they, too, share the same status of 'the other' as that afforded to Aboriginal representations. This differentiation from the normative, white, Anglo-Celtic Australian identity has historically, and culturally, led to numerous attempts to nullify 'difference' via assimilationist policies. Evidently for a host of reasons, including economic prosperity, and changing social mores and values, the representation of ethnic men as both activators and concealers of meaning in the screen adaptations examined can be accommodated within the hegemonic framework of masculinities, as proposed by Connell.

The second, and perhaps most significant conclusion of this research is the realisation that a culturally-specific form of desirable masculinity can be located within the Australian context and that this, surprisingly, is not connected to the patriarchal dividend enjoyed by the powerful hegemonic postulants. In my examination of Australian screen adaptations, I have concluded that the 'working-class battler' figure is prolific and enjoys an unprecedented status in Australian culture that it is inseparable from Australian

identity. Through the examination of the figure of the larrikin, the hallowed institution of mateship, and the mythologising of the Anzac warrior, I have concluded that Australian working-class masculinity is both centralising and hegemonic. Working-class masculinity in Australia continues to occupy a position that is at the centre of discourses about gender, class, race, sexuality and national identity (Whitman 52).

Indeed, the figure of the larrikin, such as Mick Dundee, is indistinguishable from the working-class battler and is enacted in many screen adaptations as a physical type, forged in the iconography of the bush, particularly the stockman archetype. The nexus between working-class masculinity and mateship, explicated in *Sunday Too Far Away*, is central to the construction of Australian identity. Mateship as shown in nearly all screen adaptations examined, is irrefutably an exalted state in the homosocial company of men. Working-class masculinity may not occupy a dominant position within society, but it does occupy a highly legitimising one as suggested by Christine Beasley (*Rethinking* 94). This fusion of working-class ethos and mateship is used routinely in screen texts to uphold the myth of an egalitarian society.

Interestingly enough, the subordination of gay men within a hegemonic framework of masculinities is also realised because gay men either eschew, or are spurned from, the normative averageness of working-class masculinity that occupies such a unifying position within the Australian national psyche. Australia's first openly-gay character on television, Don Finlayson, played by Joe Hasham in the 1973 film adaptation of *No 96*, illustrates this through his dual identity a lawyer and a homosexual. The national imperative of valuing men who affiliate themselves with the status of the working-class battler and condemning those who do not, can also be supported by the representation of Aboriginal men and ethnic men. This is because, as argued throughout the thesis, the

enduring figure of the working-class battler occupies such an exalted place in the enactment of masculinity in modern Australia. Nino in *They're a Weird Mob* and Vanno in *Red Dog* are two characters who both undergo immersive and assimilationist journeys of becoming Australians within the working-class battler status which is celebrated as average by 'normative' Australians.

My third, and final, comprehensive conclusion is that a definitive shift is discernible in more recent Australian screen adaptations in the way cultural representations of masculinity are understood, appreciated, and valued. As argued throughout the work, Australian adaptations articulate a narrative of Australian identity that is grounded on 'white' male heterosexuality. Congruent to this is the castigation, stigmatisation, and vilification of those, including homosexuals, indigenous and ethnic Australians, who do not perform a dominant form of hegemonic Australian masculinity and are generally 'uncoded' as men.

Throughout the work, I have argued that masculinities are constantly being reconfigured in a relational socio-economic and cultural context at the level of local, communal and global communities. In this I concur with Raewyn Connell's assertions about masculinity being connected to a variable socio-historical and cultural context and that within the spectrum of masculinities one could locate different ways that men perform their perceived 'authorised' ways of being male. The perception of masculinity as organic is also attested to in the work of Judith Butler who views gender construction as elastic, as well as in the writing of James W. Messerschmidt, who claims that the enactment of masculinity can be influenced by gender relations and can vary depending on prevailing social mores and imperatives.

Like masculinity itself, the very framework of hegemonic masculinity is also subject to changing social relations. Antonio Gramsci theorised that hegemony is the maintenance of power and control by a privileged group in society acquired without the necessity of resorting to physical combat. Connell expounds on the notion of hegemony as relational, unremittingly connected with issues of identity, race, nationhood, gender, colour, sexuality and class. For her, hegemony refers to a practice steeped in historical and cultural contexts and is constantly evolving. Hegemonic masculinity refers to a set of idealised practices as enacted by different characters in the Australian screen adaptations discussed in this thesis. Such practices point to a normative understanding of the enactment of masculinity that requires men to acknowledge the power exercised by the privileged few. All enactments of hegemonic masculinity are organic and capable of being constantly revised according to changing mores, socio-cultural, and economic conditions in a particular society. This shift within enactments of hegemonic masculinity can be witnessed in the examination of mateship, the Anzac hero and the representation of marginalised and subordinated men such as gays, Aboriginal and ethnic men.

The institution of mateship as a dogma in Australia has been an essential element of dominant masculinity, particularly its associated traits of loyalty, stoicism, dependability and group belonging, all of which are seen to be part of the egalitarian spirit in Australia. Mateship has certainly benefitted from its connection to a working-class ethos that belittles and castigates those who are positioned away from 'being average'. Ample evidence exists in 21st century screen adaptations of new progressive understandings of the phenomenon of mateship outside masculinist codes of behaviour. In the last twenty years, the status of mateship as the cornerstone of hegemonic masculinity has been challenged by the contestation of mateship by individuals, other than white heterosexual

men (Dyrenfurth 212). *Bastard Boys*, to cite but one example, demonstrates that the regional, traditionally-valued institution of mateship is overwhelmed by dominant hegemonic masculinity enacted on the global level. By scrutinising how the desirable state of mateship is exploited socially, politically culturally, and economically by agents of the hegemonic order, I have shown how the performance of masculinity is best considered within a relational framework and not as a fixed compilation of traits and categories.

Similarly, there has also been a perceptible shift in the mythologising of the Anzac hero in Australian screen adaptations, particularly how this iconic figure has confronted the challenges of pacifism and multiculturalism. The deferential positioning of the eulogised Anzac hero is certainly perplexing. Twentieth century adaptations disseminate this figure as an idealised embodiment of masculinity whose great sacrifice is linked with the national interests. Twenty-first century adaptations, such as Ivin's *Gallipoli*, Ward's *An Accidental Soldier*, and to a lesser extent, Connell's *Balibo,* however, disseminate a more nuanced representation of this revered figure. They explicitly demonstrate that aspiring to the status of national warrior does not automatically confer the commensurate patriarchal entitlements to aspirants. On the one hand, men involved in military conflict may gain the cultural kudos associated with the legendary status of Anzacs, but on the other, their participation and personal sacrifice in military conflict only advances, legitimises and perpetuates the interests of others, rendering these men complicit in perpetuating the ideological agendas of the more powerful members of society.

It appears that a shift has also taken place in the way gay men are configured within the national narrative. The subordination of gay men constitutes the clearest example of how the relational framework of hegemonic masculinity operates by oppressing, demonising

and actively persecuting men because of their sexual orientation. I have examined this in terms of the invisibility and lack of complexity of gay characters in screen adaptations, the problematisation and demonisation of homosexuality, as well as the complex nature of homophobias. As evidenced by the screen adaptations examined in this thesis, gay men in Australia had to either camouflage their very existence, or, even if they could, found it difficult to enact a masculinity which is perceived as average. As a result, gay men have been viewed outside the empowering working-class tier in Australian society. I have also examined the progress that has been achieved in the way subordinated masculinities intersect with and challenge hegemonic masculinity and conjectured that such progress might lead to a more equitable alignment of gender hierarchies, possibly through the irreverence of queer politics and the agency of subordinated groups as seen through the emergence of inclusive masculinities.

I have herein argued that Aboriginal men tend to be represented in a homogeneous manner within the dual discourses of infantilisation and vanquishment in Australian screen adaptations. Such discourses combine to produce their own limited and limiting stereotypical representations of Aboriginal men that enact the very marginalisation that prevents them from enjoying the power and status associated with more exemplary masculinities. Despite this dire and disempowering representation of Aboriginal men in the Australian screen adaptations examined in this forty-year period, a faint shift has been noted more recently which is aligned to the liberal reconciliatory politics of filmmakers such as Baz Luhrmann and John Curran and the emergence of Aboriginal directors such as Rachel Perkins and Wayne Blair.

Contrastingly, a definitive shift is discernible in Australian screen adaptations in the way cultural representations of Australian ethnic masculinity are understood, appreciated, and

valued. The marginalisation of Australian ethnic men has traditionally been seen in a problematic and xenophobic context. This differentiation from the normative, white Anglo-Celtic Australian identity has historically and culturally led to numerous attempts to nullify 'difference' via assimilationist policies and to transform ethnic men into 'authentic' Australian men. The impulse for inclusivity in Australian cultural and political life since the official adoption of the multicultural agenda, has led to an acceptance of one's racial/cultural hybridity and has challenged the marginalisation hitherto ascribed to some groups more than others, mainly through economic ascendancy.

Future Directions

My research project has focussed on the representation of the multiplicity of masculinities and their fusion with national identity as evident in Australian screen adaptations in the period between 1975 and 2015. One avenue future researchers may choose to investigate is how the adaptation process can challenge this masculinist view of Australian identity by focussing on the representation of female characters in the same adaptations listed in Appendix 1.

I restricted my argument to the Australian context, but throughout its development I have found myself having to seek answers and exemplars outside this national parameter. The globalised interconnected world of 2017 makes this imperative. Future research could examine the points of convergence and divergence in the representation of masculinities across different English-speaking societies and speculate what can account for these. Additionally, another extension of my work would be a critical examination of how differently masculinity is represented in original screenplays. To cite but one example, in my research I have noted that a proliferation of screen texts dealing with Aboriginal men in the last five years extend and challenge some of the assertions I have made in regards to the representation of Aboriginal masculinity as seen through the process of adaptation.

My research into adaptations included investigating whether the apparatus, technology, hardware and personnel involved in the actual production/construction of a screen text promote a certain type of masculinity and a patriarchal viewpoint that is perhaps collusive with political and economic forms of power. My research found that 85% of the 362 screen adaptations released in the forty-year period between 1975 and 2015 were

directed by men and a further 12% were co-directed by men and women. The male stranglehold on the film and television industries is problematized even further when considering the role of cinematography, a vital technical aspect of film production which is inseparable from the aesthetic dimensions and calibre of a film. Since only 4 films in the list of the top 100 grossing Australian films of all time (see Appendix 2) have been filmed by female cinematographers, how can patriarchal systems of power, control and gaze be challenged when the female gaze is almost totally absent from the act of looking?

Equally as fascinating for future researchers is the possibility of witnessing the adaptation process throughout its entire duration which includes the pre-production, production, and post-production phases. This would position the researcher as an active 'embedded' participant in the adaptation process and such an extended 'ethnographic' case study would provide invaluable insights as to how the adaptation process can be considered as a gendered process. This would involve a great deal of strategizing and negotiating as well as the ability to choose the 'right' vehicle.

In Fig. 4, which I reproduce here, I scrutinised the time lapse involved in the adaptation process and pondered how this might influence the context of reception and account for changes to the ideological agenda disseminated by the newer text. Connected to this would be a critical investigation of 'novelisations', a by-product of the adaptation process that are often decried and vilified. In my own research I have found some novelisations such as Helen Garner's *Moving Out* and Jack Bennett's *Gallipoli*, to be complex texts in their own right and not mere prose transcriptions of the respective film texts. Bennett's novel of *Gallipoli,* for example, provides a complementary narrative from Sister Helen; a point of view which is totally missing from the androcentric Peter Weir film. More intriguing and deserving of scholarly work is the notion of the 'synchrontext', a term I have coined and ascribed to texts where the script for both novel and film script have

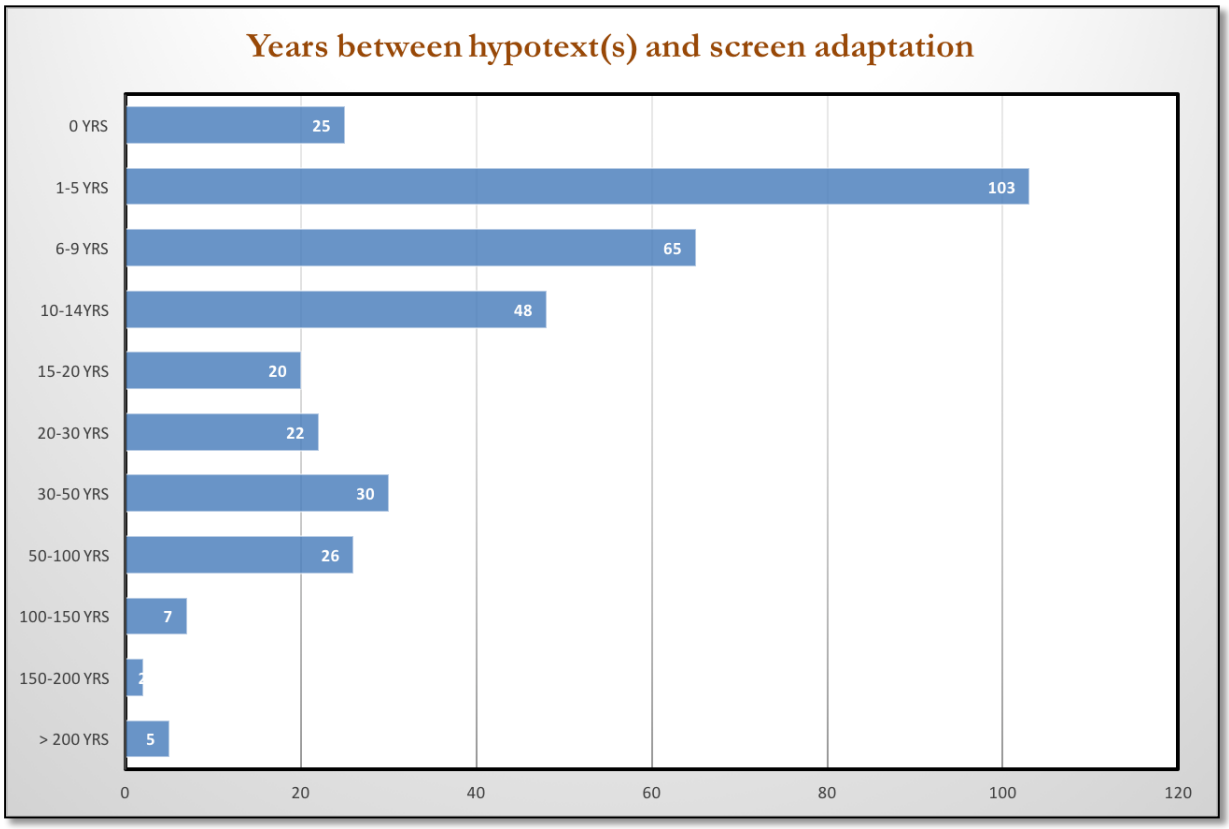

Fig. 4. This chart shows the time lapse between the production/publication of the 'original' source material and its screen adaptation.

been developed simultaneously, and/or by the same creator. The novel and script of *The Water Diviner* provide one such an example. Andrew Anastasios co-wrote the script with Andrew Knight and he simultaneously also co-wrote the novel with his partner, Dr Meaghan Wilson-Anastasios.

I have mentioned in my analysis of *Crocodile Dundee* how the "tall story, or yarn, is treated with a degree of irreverence by the locals" and this narrative trope is something that beckons further scholarly investigation as a cogent Australian cinema genre. What Australian adaptations such as *Crocodile Dundee*, *Babe*, *Australia*, *Red Dog*, *The Sapphires, Cloudstreet* and *The Dressmaker* have made possible is the redefinition of a previously marginalised literary genre, the yarn; a story that includes an element of incredulity. Notably, yarns have "flourished in the atmospheres of frontier life, the 'badlands' and pioneering endeavours such as the Gold Rush in Australia" (Cuddon 711). Graham Huggan identifies the yarn as a "demotic mode" and suggests that by its association with both oral and literary traditions it becomes a potent popular culture form (51). Part of the yarn's potency is the ability to connect with wide audiences both in Australia and abroad, critically and commercially, and in so doing, embrace a type of conventional ideology that privileges white patriarchy.

Another aspect that my research has flagged is the problematized relationship between fathers and sons in patriographical Australian adaptations either through death, absence or negligence. Examples of such difficult relationships abound in adaptations analysed in this work including *Australia*, *Muriel's Wedding*, *Blackrock*, *The Boys*, *Animal Kingdom*, *The Man from Snowy River*, *Careful He Might Hear You* and *Romulus, My Father*. Examples also proliferate in post-2015 screen adaptations including *Lion* (2016), *Jasper Jones* (2017), *Ali's Wedding* (2017), *Joe Cinque's Consolation* (2016) and *Breath* (2017). It appears that positive

relationships between fathers and sons are rare in Australian adaptations with the exception of *The Boys Are Back* (2009) and *The Water Diviner*, something which contrasts dramatically from the saccharine but revered representation of fathers and sons in Hollywood films.

The performativity of gender constitutes an important aspect of my scrutiny of hegemonic masculinities and even though I flag that 'masculinity' may not be restricted to biologically-born men, I have not examined transsexuality in detail, even though this was at the core of *Carlotta*, an adaptation about Australia's most famous transgender entertainer, adapted from the 2003 biography *Carlotta* written by Carol Byron and Prue MacSween.[98] Carlotta, as a constructed persona, traverses that liminal space between reality and fiction. The constructedness of a character is something that fascinates me, particularly the 'afterlives' of fictional characters; how a character can continue to change with each recalibration. It would be worthwhile for future researchers to pursue this, particularly researchers who are interested in working at the intersection of film and sociology. For instance, the ongoing adaptation of Mrs Norm Everage from 1955 to 2015, including her various transformations of: 'Housewife and Superstar', 'Dame', 'Megastar' and 'Gigastar.'

Throughout my research I have flagged the importance of the actor as an adapter and have signalled the inherent challenges, and considerations when one is decoding the gesturality of actors such as Jack Thompson, Vince Colosimo and David Gulpilil. Encouraged by Linda Hutcheon's comment (81) that actors can be considered as adapters, I propose that this is another area that future researchers in adaptation studies

[98] Carol was the named adopted by Richard Byron before his gender transition. Ms Byron, draws a distinction between herself, Carol, and her more flamboyant persona, Carlotta.

can pursue. The work of transformative actors like Cate Blanchett, Gary Oldman or Meryl Streep, who change themselves in each new role so markedly, would be particularly useful here.

My close examination of Weir's *Gallipoli*, a film which presented military defeat in terms of heroism and the forging of nationhood, might prompt other researchers to consider whether this is a unique manifestation within the Australian context or not, by comparing how other national cinemas handle the reality of militaristic defeat and/or success through the cinematic lens. I have already tentatively hypothesised that the box-office, particularly in American cinema, favours military success; for example, *American Sniper* (2014), *Saving Private Ryan* (1998), *Pearl Harbor* (2001), and *Inglorious Basterds* (2009) are some high-grossing films that eulogize success at the battlefield.

In my discussion of *Holding the Man* I mentioned the similarities of this adaptation to other adaptations such as *Angels in America* (2003) and *The Normal Heart* (2014). Starting with Gérard Genette's definition of transtextuality, future researchers could scrutinise documentaries and feature films from a number of countries investigating different representations and national responses to the global pandemic of AIDS[99].

Finally, one formative experience gained throughout my candidature was the opportunity to work with other researchers from different faculties at the University of Tasmania. One striking observation was that my peers in the Science Faculty often worked collaboratively on their research as part of a mega-project. This is something that

[99] Documentaries could include *Positive* (Germany, 1990), *Haunting Douglas* (New Zealand, 2003), *How to Survive a Plague* (USA, 2012), *Common Threads: Stories from the Quilt* (USA, 1990) *Transmission: The journey from AIDS to HIV* (Sweden, 2014). Feature films could include *An Early Frost* (USA 1985), *A Death in the Family* (New Zealand 1987), *Longtime Companion* (1989), *Les Nuits Fauves* (France, 1992), *Blue* (UK, 1993), *Philadelphia* (USA 1994), *Todo Sobre Mi Madre* (Spain 1999), *Walking on Water* (Australia 2002), *My Brother ... Nikhil* (India, 2005) and *House of Boys* (Luxembourg/Germany 2009).

perhaps might be considered in the future in the Humanities also, particularly when attempting to examine areas in Adaptation studies which are impossible to complete exhaustively by any one individual candidate. It would be fascinating to consider the adaptation of an entire decade, for example the 1960s, through the plethora of adaptation texts which are set at this particular time.

This research process has certainly enabled me to see the world through the eyes of others. For me, the adaptation process is an organic, complex, and rewarding process that brings immense pleasure to audiences through the overlapping of both the newer and the older text. I'd like to complete this thesis by citing the words of the Australian writer Peter Carey who encapsulates, for me, the rewards and joys of the adaptation process:

> And when he told stories about the trees and the spirits of the forest he was only dramatizing things people already knew, shaping them just as you pick up rocks scattered on the ground to make a cairn. He was merely sewing together the bright patchworks of lives, legends, myths, beliefs, hearsay into a splendid cloak that gave a richer glow to all their lives. He knew when it was right to tell one story and not another. He knew how a story could give strength or hope. He knew stories, important stories, so sad he could hardly tell them for weeping. And also he gave value to a story so that it was something or worth, as important, in its way, as a strong house or a good dam. He insisted that the story was not his, and not theirs either. You must give something, he told the children, a sapphire or blue bread made from cedar ash. And what began as a game ended as a ritual (*Bliss* 347).

Appendix 1 - Index of forty years of Australian Screen Adaptations (1975-2015)

1975 *End Play* directed by Tim Burstall. Adapted from the 1972 novel of the same name by Russell Braddon.

1975 *Sunday Too Far Away* directed by Ken Hannam. Adapted from various sources including real-life events surrounding the 1956 shearers' s strike, landscape paintings by Russell Drysdale, Tom Roberts's iconic painting "Shearing the Rams", and the poem "The Shearer's Wife's Lament" that has only survived in part.

1975 *The Great McCarthy*, directed by David Baker. Adapted from the 1975 sporting satirical novel *A Salute to the Great McCarthy* by Barry Oakley.

1975 *Picnic at Hanging Rock* directed by Peter Weir. Adapted from Joan Lindsay's 1967 novel, *Picnic at Hanging Rock*. The Weir film is considered by many commentators to be the definitive example of the New Wave of Australian filmmaking.

1975 *The Removalists* directed by Tom Jeffrey. Adapted from David Williamson's successful play of the same name (1971).

1975 *Promised Woman* directed by Tom Cowan. Adapted from the 1963 play, *Throw Away Your Harmonica* by Theo Patrikareas. Deals with the problems facing a Greek migrant woman who is rejected from her sponsored suitor because of her age.

1976 *Break of Day* was written by Cliff Green and directed by Ken Hannam. The film was filmed by Russell Boyd who would receive great acclaim for his cinematography of *Gallipoli* in 1981. A novelisation of the script was released by Hodder and Stoughton in the same year.

1976 *Let the Baloon Go* directed by Oliver Howes is a children's film dealing with a young boy's fight with polio. Adapted from the 1968 novel for young adults of the same name by Ivan Southall.

1976 *Mad Dog Morgan* directed by Philippe Mora. Adapted from the novel *Morgan* by

Margaret Carnegie. Both texts present a genuine friendship between the marginalised bushranger and a young Aboriginal man.

1976 *Power Without Glory* directed by John Gauci, Michael Ludbrook, Doug Sharp, Keith Wilkes and David Zweck. The TV miniseries examining political machinations is adapted from the 1947 novel of the same name by Frank Hardy.

1976 *Storm Boy* directed by Henri Safran. Adapted from Colin Thiele's 1963 children's book *Storm Boy*. Both texts dramatise a lonely boy's journey of self-actualisation whilst nursing an injured pelican, Mr Percival, under the guardianship of a genial Aboriginal man. Winner of Best Film at the 1977 AFI awards.

1976 *Summer of Secrets* directed by theatre director Jim Sharman. Adapted from Mary Shelley's classic novel, *Frankenstein*.

1976 *The Cake Man* is a TV miniseries directed by Douglas Sharp. Adapted from the play, *The Cake Man* by Robert J. Merritt. The play is culturally-significant because it is the first widely-performed Indigenous text in Australian drama. Set in WA at a Christian mission but from the perspective of an Aboriginal character.

1976 *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith* directed by Fred Schepisi. Adapted from the 1972 Thomas Keneally novel of the same name. The novel, a 1972 Booker Prize-nominated one, is the first commercially-successful one for Thomas Keneally and is narrated from the perspective of Jimmie, a young Aboriginal man. Both texts challenge the so-called peaceful colonisation of Australia. Winner of the Audience Award at the 1980 Amiens International Film Festival 1980 and nominated for the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival.

1976 *The Devil's Playground* directed and written by Fred Schepisi. Adapted from autobiographical experiences in a Catholic seminary. Winner of five major awards including Best Feature at the AFI Awards. A sequel, *Return to the Devil's Playground*, directed by Rachel Ward and Tony Krawitz examining the life of the lead character from *The Devil's Playground* was released in 2014.

1976 *The Fourth Wish* directed by Don Chaffey is a children's film focussing on young Sean, who is dying of leukaemia and wants his father to grant him three final wishes. Adapted from the 1973 ABC miniseries of the same name by Michael Craig.

1976 *Caddie* directed by Donald Crombie. Adapted from *Caddie - the Story of a Barmaid* by an unknown author; later revealed to be Catherine Beatrice Edmonds. The author Dymphna Cusack for whom Edmonds was working for as a cleaner edited the biography of *Caddie*.

1976 *Don's Party* directed by Bruce Beresford. Adapted from David Williamson's play of the same name (1971). Both texts celebrate and critique middle-class sensibilities during an election night party. Winner of six prizes at the 1977 AFI awards including Best Screenplay.

1976 *Eliza Frazer* directed by Tim Burstall is inspired by the real-life incident involving a young Englishwoman who had been taken prisoner by an Aboriginal tribe on K' garri island, off the coast of Southern Queensland. *A Fringe of Leaves,* a 1976 novel by Patrick White, also tells this same story and some claim it is the hypotext for Burstall's work. The film was released abroad as *The Rollicking Adventures of Eliza Fraser*.

1977 *Dot and the Kangaroo* directed by Yoram Gross. Adapted from the novel of the same name by Ethel Pedley.

1977 *The F. J. Holden* directed by Michael Thornhill. Adapted from a series of poems by Terry Larsen that have been published in a number of different journals (mainly *Meanjin*).

1977 *The Getting of Wisdom* directed by Bruce Beresford. Adapted from the Henry Handel Richardson novel of the same name (1910).

1977 *The Picture Show Man* directed by Joan Long. Adapted from the memoirs of Lyle Penn, contained in *Penn's Pictures on Tour* and the book *The Picture Show Man*. Penn voluntarily sent his memoirs to the producer/director Long who adapted these for her screenplay.

1977 *The Mango Tree* directed by Kevin Dobson. Adapted from *The Mango Tree,* a 1974 novel by Ronald McKie. A Miles Franklin-winning novel. The film contains one of the few appearances of Robert Helpmann as an actor in Australia.

1978 *Blue Fin* directed by Carl Schultz. Adapted from the children's book by Colin Thiele of the same name (1969). The text focuses on a lonely young boy's heroic actions during a fishing expedition that saves the lives of others.

1978 *The Irishman*, set in the Australian outback, is directed by David Crombie. Adapted from *The Irishman*, a Miles Franklin-winning novel by Elizabeth O'Conner (1960).

1978 *Weekend of Shadows* directed by Tom Jeffrey. Adapted from *The Reckoning*, a novel by Hugh Atkinson.

1978 *The Last Tasmanian* a documentary directed by Tom Haydon and Rhys Jones. Adapted from historical research and artefacts by Dr Rhys Jones and Dr Jim Allen.

1979 *Cathy's Child* directed by Donald Crombie. Adapted from the 1973 novel *A Piece of Paper* by Dick Wordley. Examines the conflict that can arise in multicultural Australia. Following the film's success, Wordley's novel was reissued using the name of the film. Winner of Best Actress at the 1979 AFI Awards.

1979 *Dawn!* directed by Ken Hannan. Adapted from the real-life story of Olympian swimmer Dawn Fraser. Ms Fraser acted as a technical adviser for the film.

1979 *Ride on Stranger*, a TV miniseries directed by Carl Schultz. Adapted from the satiric novel, *Ride on Stranger* by Kylie Tennant (1943).

1979 *A Toast to Melba* is a TV film directed by Alan Burke. Adapted from *A Toast to Melba,* a play by Jack Hibberd (1975). Both texts trace the life of the titular diva from her early life in Melbourne to her death in Egypt. Several real-life luminaries, such as George Bernard Shaw and Oscar Wilde, are characters in the play.

1979 *Coralie Lansdowne Says No* is a TV film directed by Michael Carson. Adapted from Alex

Buzo's proto-feminist 1974 play of the same name.

1979 *My Brilliant Career*, directed by Gillian Armstrong. Adapted from the influential 1901 Miles Franklin novel, *My Brilliant Career*. An acclaimed film that launched the career of Judy Davis internationally. A Cannes winner for Best director, winner of Best Actress at the BAFTA and winner of 6 AFI awards including Best Film.

1979 *The Last of the Knucklemen* directed by Tim Burstall. Adapted from the 1973 play, *The Last of the Knucklemen* by John Powers. Dealing with the lives of Australian miners.

1979 *The Night the Prowler* directed by Jim Sharman. Adapted from "The Night the Prowler", a 1964 short story by Patrick White.

1979 *The Odd Angry Shot*, deals with the experiences of a group of Australian men in the Vietnam conflict. Directed by Tom Jeffrey, it was adapted from *The Odd Angry Shot,* a novel by William N. Naggle (1975).

1979 *Dimboola* directed by John Duigan. Adapted from the 1968 Jack Hibberd play of the same name.

1979 T*im*, directed by Michael Pate, stars a young Mel Gibson as a working-class handyman with a low IQ. Adapted from *Tim,* a 1974 novel by Colleen McCulloch. One of the few Australian adaptations to deal with 'class' as its central theme.

1979 *Money Movers* directed by Bruce Beresford. Adapted from the 1976 novel, *The Money Movers* by Devon Minchin.

1980 *Manganinnie* directed by Tasmanian John Honey. Adapted from the 1979 novel *Manganinnie* by Beth Roberts. A poignant tale, filmed entirely on location in Tasmania, chronicling the search of an Aboriginal woman for her lost tribe, accompanied only by a young white girl.

1980 *A Town Like* Alice is a TV miniseries directed by David Stevens. Adapted from the 1950 Nevil Shute novel, *A Town Like Alice*. The novel is known as *The Legacy* in the

United States. One of the highest-rating miniseries on Australian television and one which was broadcast internationally.

1980 *Breaker Morant* directed by Bruce Beresford. Adapted from *Breaker Morant: A Play in Two Acts,* a historical play by Kenneth G. Ross (1978). Additional material in the Beresford film have been adapted from the 1973 novel *The Breaker* by Kit Denton. Nominated for Best Writing, Screenplay Based on Material from Another Medium at the Academy Awards. Winner of 10 AFI Awards including Best Film and Best Screenplay, Original or Adapted. Jack Thompson won the Best Actor Award at the Cannes Film Festival.

1980 *The Club*, directed by Bruce Beresford. Adapted from *The Club,* a David Williamson play (1978). The play was performed as *The Players* in the US.

1980 *Nargun and the Stars* is a TV miniseries which was produced by Lynn Bayonas. Adapted by Margaret Kelly from the 1974 children's novel by Patricia Wrightson of the same name.

1980 *Sale of the Century*. An Australian game show hosted by Tony Barber and Victoria Nicholls and adapted from the 1970s television show, *Great Temptation*.

1980 *The Timeless Land* is a TV miniseries which was directed by Rob Stewart and Michael Carson. Adapted from the 1941 novel by Eleanor Dark of the same name. Dark's novel is the first in a trilogy and explores the colonisation of Australia. The novel is narrated from both an English and an Aboriginal perspective.

1980 *Bedfellows*, a TV miniseries directed by Julian Pringle. Adapted from the 1975 play, *Bedfellows* by Barry Oakley.

1980 *Grendel, Grendel, Grendel*, an animated feature directed by Alexander Stitt. Adapted from the novel *Grendel* by John Gardner; itself a retelling of the Beowulf myth.

1980 *Lucinda Brayford*, a TV miniseries directed by John Gauci. Adapted from the Martin Boyd novel, *Lucinda Brayford* (1946). Boyd's text is a classic romance revolving around

the decisions made by a privileged young Melbournian woman.

1980 *Water Under the Bridge*, a TV miniseries directed by Igor Auzins. Adapted from Sumner Locke Elliot's novel *Water Under The Bridge* (1977). Both texts start with the opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge and conclude with the opening of the Sydney Opera House. An examination of the conflict between working class and middle class values as embodied by two families.

1980 *The Girl Who Met Simone de Beuvoir in Paris*, a short film directed by Richard Wherrett. Adapted from the 1974 short story of the same name by Frank Moorhouse.

1981 *Gallipoli*, the novelisation by Jack Bennett. Adapted from the feature film *Gallipoli* directed by Peter Weir. The film, written by David Williamson has, in turn, been adapted from historical events and a storyline by Peter Weir. The novel *Tell England* by British writer Ernest Raymond, can also be considered a hypotext for the film although this is uncredited in the film. The film's end credits do acknowledge Bill Gammage's *The Broken Years* (1974) and C.E.W. Bean's official history of Australia's involvement in the Anzac expedition as sources that have been used in the adaptation process. Bean is credited as a historical advisor for the film.

1981 *I Can Jump Puddles* is a TV drama directed by Kevin Dobson. Adapted from the 1960 autobiographical novel by Alan Marshall.

1981 *Mad Max 2/The Road Warrior*, directed by George Miller based on characters in the 1979 film, *Mad Max* also directed by George Miller. The film benefits greatly from a generous budget and a close adherence to 'the hero's journey' by Joseph Campbell. The ensuing result is a mythic, primal Australian western, inhabited by hordes of vengeful, virile and violent men. The director released a second sequel; *Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome* in 1985. A fourth instalment in the Mad Max franchise, *Mad Max: Fury Road* directed by, George Miller was released in 2015 to much acclaim.

1982 *1915* is a TV miniseries directed by Di Drew and Chris Thomson. Adapted from the 1980 novel of the same name by Roger McDonald.

1982 *The Man from Snowy River*, directed by George T. Miller. Adapted from the 1864 poem "The Man from Snowy River" by Banjo Patterson. A nostalgic paean to mythic Australian masculinity that remains the 11th most successful film released in Australia. The young man in the original poem gains a 'name' in the film and his trajectory to manhood is realised only after he tames the wilderness of the Victorian Alps and the wilderness of a young headstrong woman. The latter character was missing in the original source. Bruce Rowland's score for the film was so rousing and successful that it was chosen to open the 2000 Sydney Olympic Ceremony. A sequel, *The Man from Snowy River II* (released in the US as *Return to Snowy River II*) directed by Geoff Burrowes was released in 1985.

1982 *Puberty Blues* directed by Bruce Beresford. Adapted from *Puberty Blues* a novel by Gabrielle Carey and Kathy Lette (1979). The novel was partly adapted from the writing of Carey and Lette in 'The Salami Sisters'; a column published in the Sunday edition of the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*. The experiences of the thirteen-year-old girls in the novel became the adventures of sixteen-year-old girls in the film. The short novel is a classic in Australian literature and has been described by Germaine Greer as a "profoundly moral story" in her forward for the Picador edition of the text.

1982 *A Dangerous Summer/Burning Man/ Flash Fire*. This television thriller set in the Blue Mountains is known by all three titles. Directed by Quentin Masters it was adapted by the 1981 novel *A Dangerous Summer* by Richard Butler, which was, in turn, inspired by a story by Kit Denton.

1982 *Far East* directed and written by John Duigan, loosely adapted from the classic 1942 Hollywood film, *Casablanca*, directed by Michael Curtiz.

1982 *Fighting Back* directed by Michael Caufield. Adapted from the 1978 book *Tom: A Child's Life Regained* by John Embling. The novel is also known as *Tom*.

1982 *Sara Dane*. A historical mini-series directed by Gary Conway. Adapted from the 1954 novel by Catherine Gaskin of the same name that is loosely based on the life of Mary Reiby during Australia's colonial times.

1982 *Ginger Meggs*, directed by Jonathan Dawson. Adapted from the Jimmy Bancks comic strip, *Ginger Meggs* (circa 1920s).

1982 *For the Term of His Natural Life*, a TV miniseries directed by Rob Stewart. Adapted from *For the Term of His Natural Life,* an 1870 novel by Marcus Clarke. Examining the dire conditions as experienced by convicts in Colonial Australia. This is the fourth adaptation of the Clarke text that remains a popular literary title.

1982 *Monkey Grip* directed by Ken Cameron. Adapted from Helen Garner's novel of the same name centring on the lives of young, restless Melburnians living in a shared household battling social alienation and addiction.

1982 *The Year of Living Dangerously* directed by Peter Weir. Adapted from Christopher Koch's 1978 novel, *The Year of Living Dangerously*. Set against Sukarno's regime in Indonesia and told from the naive perspective of a young Australian journalist played by Mel Gibson. Winner of an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress. The film also won 6 AFI awards including Best film, director, actor and screenplay (adapted).

1982 *Turkey Shoot*, directed by Brian Trenchard-Smith, is adapted from the short story, "The Most Dangerous Game" by Richard Connell (1924). A dystopian satire that has become emblematic of the 'ozploitation' genre. The violent and graphic film portraying a group of privileged people using human targets for hunting was released as *Escape 2000* in the USA and in the United Kingdom as *Boot Camp Thatcher*. The film, a favourite of Quentin Tarantino, featured prominently in the Australian documentary, *Not Quite Hollywood: The Wild, Untold Story of Ozploitation*!

1982 *Brothers* directed was Terry Bourke. Adapted from the novel *Reflex* by Roger Ward.

1982 *We of the Never Never* directed by Igor Auzins. Adapted from *We of the Never Never,* a novel by Jeannie Gunn (1908). Considering the historical context of Gunn's novel, the novel presents a positive portrayal of race relations. Its setting, Elsey Station, so brilliantly realised by the AFI-award winning cinematography of Gary Hansen has passed onto Aboriginal custodianship in 2000 following the historic Mabo decision.

1983 *Now and Forever* directed by Adrian Carr. Adapted from the 1978 novel *Now and Forever* by Danielle Steele.

1983 *Careful, He Might Hear You* directed by Carl Schultz. Adapted from the Sumner Locke Elliott novel of the same name (1963). Examines the divide between middle-class and working-class sensibilities as embodied by two sisters squabbling over the custody of a young nephew. Winner of 8 AFI awards including Best Film and Best Screenplay, Adapted.

1983 *Moving Out*, a YA novelisation by Helen Garner and Jennifer Giles. Adapted from the 1982 film *Moving Out*, directed by Michael Pattinson. The film's screenplay was written by Jan Sardi. The film has been adapted from Giuseppe Abiuso's short novel *Diario di uno Scolaro Italo-Australiano*, (which has not been translated into English).

1983 *Dusty* directed by John Richardson. Adapted from the novel of the same name by Frank Dalby Davison.

1983 *Phar Lap* directed by Simon Wincer. Adapted from historical events and characters such as Tommy Woodcock and the legendary racehorse whose preserved heart remains a popular exhibit at the National Museum in Canberra. Adapted from various sources but predominantly *Phar Lap*, a 1980 book by Michael Wilkinson. Also, released and known as *Phar Lap: Heart of a Nation*.

1983 *Razorback,* directed by Russell Mulcahy. Adapted from the 1981 novel of the same name by Peter Brennan, first published by Fontana.

1983 *The City's Edge* directed by Ken Quinell and adapted from the 1969 novel *The Running Man* by W. A. Harbinson.

1983 *The Dismissal.* An Australian miniseries directed by George Miller, John Power, Carl Schultz, George Ogilvie and Phillip Noyce. Adapted from historical events recounting the dismissal of the Whitlam government in 1975.

1983 *The Winds of Jarrah* directed by Mark Egerton. Adapted from the 1959 novel *The House*

in the Timberwoods by Joyce Dingwell.

1983 *All the Rivers Run*, is a successful TV miniseries set in the closing years of the 19th century on the Murray River. Directed by George T. Miller, it was adapted from the historical novel, *All The Rivers Run by* Nancy Cato (1958).

1983 *Descant for Gossips*, a TV miniseries directed by Tim Burstall. Adapted by the 1960 novel of the same name by Thea Astley. This is the only one of Astley's fifteen acclaimed novels that has been adapted into film. The film rights to her final novel, Dry*land*s, have been sold but an adaptation has, so far, failed to materialise.

1983 *The Thorn Birds*, a TV miniseries directed by Daryl Duke. Adapted by the 1977 novel of the same name by Colleen McCullough. Excoriated by the author even though the miniseries remains the 2nd highest viewed miniseries of all times world-wide, after *Roots*. Winner of 4 Golden Globes awards including Best Mini-Series or Motion Picture Made for TV and 6 Emmy awards.

1984 *Bodyline***.** An Australian television miniseries adapted from events relating to the 1933 cricket tour of England in Australia. Directed by Denny Lawrence, Lex Marinos, George Ogilvie and Carl Schultz.

1984 *The Wild Duck* directed by Henri Safran. Adapted from the classic play of the same name by Henrik Ibsen (1884).

1984 *Annie's Coming Out*, also known in the US as *Test of Love*, directed by Gil Brealy. Adapted from the biography of Anne McDonald, *Annie's Coming Out*, written by Rosemary Crossley and Anne McDonald in 1980.

1984 *Strikebound*, directed by Richard Lownstein. Adapted from *Dead Men Don't Dig Coal* a novel by Wendy Lowenstein.

1984 *The Cowra Breakout*. An Australian drama series directed by Chris Noonan and Phillip Noyce. Adapted from historical events during WWII involving the escape of Japanese prisoners from a POW camp in the outback town of Cowra.

1984 *Where the Green Ants Dream* was directed by German film director Werner Herzog. The film was adapted from the judicial case of Milirrpum v Nabalco Pty Ltd, which was the first litigation case of native land claim in Australia.

1985 *A Fortunate Life*, a TV drama directed by Marcus Cole and Henri Safran. Adapted from the eventful autobiography by Albert Facey (1981).

1985 *Burke & Wills* directed by Graeme Clifford. Adapted from the disastrous historical expedition of 1860.

1985 *I Own the Racecourse* directed by Stephen Ramsey. Adapted from the 1968 children's book of the same name by award-winning author, Patricia Wrightson.

1985 *Robbery Under Arms*, directed by Donald Crombie. Adapted from the 1888 novel, *Robbery Under Arms* by Rolf Boldrewood. Earlier film adaptations of this classic text have been released in 1907, 1911, 1920 and 1957.

1985 *The Perfectionist*, directed by Chris Thomson. Adapted from the 1982 play by David Williamson of the same name.

1985 *An Indecent Obsession*, directed by Lex Marinos. Adapted from *Indecent Obsession,* a romance novel by Colleen McCulloch (1981).

1985 *The Coca-Cola Kid* directed by Dusan Makaveyev. Adapted from several short stories in *The Americans, Baby* by Frank Moorhouse (1972).

1985 *The Empty Beach* directed by Chris Thomson. Adapted from the 1983 Peter Corris novel of the same name. This is the only one of Corris's forty-one detective novels featuring the iconic detective Cliff Hardy to have been adapted into a film.

1985 *The Naked Country* directed by Tim Burstall. Adapted from the 1960 novel of the same name by Morris West.

1985 *Rebel* directed by Michael Jenkins. Adapted from the 1980 play *No Names… No Pack*

Drill by Bob Herbert.

1985 *Bliss* directed by Ray Lawrence. Adapted from the 1981 Peter Carey novel of the same name. *Bliss* has also been adapted into an opera in 2012 by Brett Dean and Amanda Holden for *Opera Australia*.

1986 *Crocodile Dundee* directed by Peter Faiman. Adapted from a character developed by Paul Hogan for his Television show ('74-84), a series of advertisements for Australian Tourism and, purportedly, the real-life story of Rod Ansell. The latter, unsuccessfully, attempted to sue Mr Hogan for breach of copyright. Despite its 'adaptation' status, the film was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Writing, Screenplay Written Directly for the Screen.

1986 *Run, Chrissie, Run!* directed by Chris Langman. Adapted from the 1981 illustrated children's novel *When We Ran* by Keith Leopold.

1986 *The Fringe Dwellers*, directed by Bruce Beresford. Adapted from the 1961 Nene Gare novel of the same name. The first Australian film to focus exclusively on the lives of Indigenous Australians. The much-loved Australian poet Oodgeroo can be seen in a minor part as an Aboriginal elder. She participated in the film because of her political conviction that the 'visibility' of Aboriginal people must increase.

1986 *The Harp in the South*, a TV miniseries directed by George Whaley. Adapted from the much-loved 1948 Ruth Park novel, *The Harp in the South*.

1986 *Alice to Nowhere*. An Australian miniseries directed by John Power. Adapted from the 1984 novel of the same name by Evan Green.

1986 *Departure* directed by Brian Kavanagh. Filmed in Tasmania and adapted from the play *A Pair of Claws* by Michael Gurr.

1986 *Five Times Dizzy* is a TV miniseries directed by John Eastway and adapted from the young adult novel name of the same name written by Nadia Wheatley in 1982.

1986 *The Great Bookie Robbery*, an Australian miniseries by Marcus Cole & Mark Joffe is based on actual events involving the theft of millions of dollars in Melbourne in 1976. None of the five men purportedly involved in the robbery were convicted (Raymond Chuck-Bennett, Brian and Leslie Kane, Ian Carroll, Laurence Prendergast and Norman Lee). One of these, Lee, acted as a consultant on this six-hour miniseries. The case continues to fascinate Australians evident from the numerous adaptations of this historical event. This includes, *Underbelly: A Tale of Two Cities*, the second series of the crime drama series in 2009 as well as the film, *The Hard Word*, directed and written by Scott Roberts.

1986 *Dead-end Drive-in* directed by Brian Trenchard-Smith. Adapted from the short story "Crabs" included in the anthology *Fat Man in History* by Peter Carey (1974).

1986 *For Love Alone* directed by Stephen Wallace. Adapted from the Christina Stead novel, *For Love Alone* (1945). Christina Stead is considered one of Australia's literary giants but this has been the only screen adaptation of her work.

1986 *Playing Beattie Bow* directed by Donald Crombie. Adapted from the YA novel *Playing Beattie Bow by* Ruth Park (1980).

1986 *Fortress* is directed by James Ricketson and adapted from the 1988 novel of the same name by Gabrielle Lord.

1986 *The Hour Before My Brother Dies*, a TV drama directed by James Clayden. Adapted from the Daniel Keene play of the same name.

1987 *Always Afternoon*, a miniseries directed by David Stevens. Adapted from the 1981 novel of the same name by Gwen Kelly.

1987 *Dark Age* directed by Arch Nicholson. Adapted from the 1980 novel *Numunwari* by Grahame Webb.

1987 *Nancy Wake*. An Australian mini-series directed by Pino Amenta chronicling the real-life story of Australian heroine Nancy Wake. Adapted from the 1986 autobiography *The White Mouse* by Nancy Wake.

1987 *The Marsupials: The Howling III* directed by Philippe Mora. Adapted from the earlier *Howling* films. Filmed in Australia with an Australian cast. The film is also set in Australia.

1987 *Twelfth Night* directed by Neil Armfield. Adapted from the play by William Shakespeare.

1987 *Poor Man's Orange*, a TV miniseries directed by George Whaley. Adapted from Ruth Park's 1949 novel *Poor Man's Orange*. The novel is a sequel to *Harp in the South*.

1987 *Slate, Wyn and Me* directed by Tom McLennan. Adapted from the novel by Georgia Savage, *Slate & Me & Blanche McBride*, 1983.

1987 *The Place at the Coast* directed by George Ogilvie. Adapted from the novel of the same name by Jane Hyde, 1987. The novel is also known as *The Bee Eater*.

1987 *The Tale of Ruby Rose* directed by Roger Scholes. Adapted from oral histories and photographs collected by Roger Scholes in the North-western Tasmanian in the 1970s; particularly a story by an 85-year-old Mrs Miles.

1987 *Travelling North* directed by Carl Schultz. Adapted from the 1979 David Williamson play, *Travelling North*.

1987 *Vincent* a documentary animation feature directed by Paul Cox. Adapted from a series of letters written by Vincent Van Gogh to his brother Theo.

1987 *Kangaroo* directed by Tim Burstall. Adapted from the novel 1923 of the same name by *D. H. Lawrence*.

1988 *Evil Angels* directed by Fred Schepisi was released in the US as *A Cry in the Dark*. Adapted from the 1985 nonfiction book, *Evil Angels* by John Bryson. Deals with the much-publicised disappearance of baby Azaria Chamberlain at Uluru. The film earned an Academy Award nomination for Meryl Streep for playing Lindy Chamberlain. The film was critically acclaimed but its poor box-office performance was blamed on

viewer fatigue. In 2012 the Northern Territory coroner corrected Azaria's death certificate to record that she had been taken by a dingo. Streep has won many major awards for her performance including Best Actress at the Cannes Film Festival.

1988 *The Everlasting Secret Family* directed by Michael Thornhill. Adapted from the novella *The Everlasting Secret Family and Other Secrets* by Frank Moorhouse (1980).

1988 *The Shiralee*, a TV miniseries directed by George Ogilvie. Adapted from the 1955 novel, *The Shiralee* by D'Arcy Niland.

1988 *Ghosts of the Civil Dead* directed by John Hillcoat. Adapted from the nonfiction book *In the Belly of the Beast* which was itself adapted from the true-life events involving Jack Henry Abbott.

1988 *Henry Lawson's Joe Wilson*, a six-hour miniseries for Channel 7 directed by Geoffrey Nottage. Adapted from several short stories by Henry Lawson.

1988 *Crocodile Dundee II* directed by John Cornell. Adapted from the film, *Crocodile Dundee* directed by Peter Faiman in 1986.

1988 *Emerald City*, directed by Michael Jenkins. Adapted from *Emerald City,* a David Williamson play (1987) concerns itself with the cultural antipathy between Melburnians and Sydneysiders.

1988 *The Far Country*. A TV miniseries directed by George Miller. Adapted from the 1952 Neville Shute novel of the same name.

1989 *Acropolis Now* is an Australian sitcom. Created by Nick Giannopoulos, George Kapiniaris and Simon Palomares. Adapted from characters from their comedy stage show, *Wogs out of Work*.

1989 *Body Surfer* directed by Ian Barry is a miniseries. Adapted from the collection of short stories, *The Bodysurfers*, by Robert Drewe.

1989 *Boys in the Island* directed by Geoff Bennett. Adapted from an autobiographical novel by Christopher Koch, who also wrote the screenplay based on his own material.

1989 *Devil in the Flesh* directed by Scott Murray. Adapted from the novel *Le Diable au Corps* by Raymond Radiguet.

1989 *Round the Twist*, television series directed by Esben Storm. The first two seasons are adapted by children's novels by Paul Jennings.

1989 *Compo* directed by Nigel Buesst. Adapted from *Claim No. Z84,* an Abe Pogos play (1989).

1989 *Grim Pickings*, a TV Film directed by Riccardo Pellizzeri. Adapted from *Grim Pickings,* a Jennifer Rowe novel (1988).

1989 *The Delinquents*, directed by Chris Thomson and starring Kylie Minogue, is adapted from Criena Rohan's 1986 novel, *The Delinquents*.

1989 *Dead Calm* directed by Phillip Noyce. Adapted from the 1963 American novel of the same name by Charles Williams. This was the first Australian film that launched Nicole Kidman's international career.

1989 *Mull* directed by Don McLennan. Adapted from the 1986 novel *Mullaway* by Bron Nicholls.

1990 *Death in Brunswick* directed by John Ruane. Adapted from *Death in Brunswick, a* 1987 novel by Boyd Oxlade.

1990 *Blood Oath* also known as *Prisoner of the Sun*, directed by Stephen Wallace. Adapted from real-life events involving the trial of Japanese soldiers against Allied troops on the Indonesian island of Ambon. Stars Bryan Brown and Russell Crowe. The film only recuperated one tenth of its $10K budget which resulted in the cancellation of a planned project involving the Cowra Breakout.

1990 *Boy Soldiers* is a short feature film that appeared as part of a series of films called *More Winners*. The script by Cliff Green, adaptor of *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, was turned into a novelisation by him in the same year and released by Penguin. The intertexts focus on the actions of a fourteen-year-old conscientious objector who refuses to comply with authorities at the outbreak of WWI.

1990 *Come in Spinner*, a TV Drama directed by Robert Marchand. Adapted from the 1951 novel *Come in Spinner* by Dymphna Cusak and Florence Jones.

1990 *Shadows of the Heart*, a TV series directed by Rod Hardy. Adapted from *The Kangaroo Island Doctor*, a novel by Joy Seager, 1980.

1991 *Flirting* directed and written by John Duigan. Adapted from characters created by John Duigan in his 1987 film, *The Year My Voice Broke*.

1991 *Ratbag Hero*, a TV film directed by Oscar Whitbread. Adapted from the 1988 biography *A Riverman's Story* Ernest by Michael 'Mick' Kelsall.

1991 *Say a Little Prayer* directed by Richard Lowenstein. Adapted from the young adult novel *Came Back to Show You I Could Fly* by Robin Klein.

1991 *Eden's Lost*, a TV miniseries directed by Neil Armfield. Adapted from the Sumner Locke Elliot novel of the same name (1969).

1991 *Golden Fiddles*, a TV miniseries directed by Claude Fournier. Adapted from the Mary Grant Bruce novel, *Golden Fiddles* (1928).

1991 *Tracks of Glory*, a TV miniseries directed by Marcus Cole. Adapted from the book, *Major Taylor in Australia* by Jim Fitzgerald.

1992 *Romper Stomper* directed and written by Geoffrey Wright. *Romper Stomper* is adapted by the life of Dane Sweetman, who corresponded with Wright whilst incarcerated and who provided him with transcripts of his trial. The omission to acknowledge the hypotext in this critically successful film has generated much debate in the media. A

novelisation by Jocelyn Harewood based on the Wright film has been released in 1993. One of the few Australian films rated R to achieve financial success. The film has been a critical success and many credit it for the launch of Russell Crowe's international career in film.

1992 *Strictly Ballroom* directed by Baz Luhrmann. Adapted from his play that was first performed at the *Sydney Theatre Company* in 1988. Several reimaginings of the play have taken place before its adaptation into a feature film. The 1992 film has, in turn, been adapted into a full-scale stage musical that debuted in Sydney in 2014.

1992 *Fern Gully: The Last Rainforest* directed Bill Kroyer. Adapted from the novel of the same name by Diana Young. The film is now remembered for its parallels with the biggest grossing film of all time, *Avatar*.

1992 *Turtle Beach* directed by Stephen Wallace. Adapted from the novel of the same name by Blanche d'Alpuget. The film is also known as *The Killing Beach*.

1992 *Blinky Bill* directed by Yoram Gross. Adapted from the 1939 children's book, *The Complete Adventures of Blinky Bill* by Dorothy Wall.

1993 *The Piano* directed by Jane Campion. Adapted from the 1920 novel *The Story of a New Zealand River* by Jane Maunder. A novelisation by Jane Campion and Kate Pullinger was released in 1995. The source of the adaptation was not widely known at the time of the film's release and, perhaps ironically, the film won its director an Academy Award for Best Original Screenplay.

1993 *The Heartbreak Kid* directed by *Michael Jenkins*. Adapted from the Richard Barrett play for young adults*, The Heartbreak Kid* (1988).

1993 *Blackfellas* directed by James Ricketson. Adapted from the 1981 novel, *The Day of the Dog* by Archie Weller.

1993 *Black River* directed by Kevin Lucas. Adapted from a contemporary opera by Andrew & Julianne Schultz. Made in association with Bangarra Dance Theatre.

1993 *Joh's Jury* is a television drama starring Gerry Connelly as the titular Queensland Premier. Directed by Ken Cameron, *Joh's Jury,* has been adapted from the official transcripts of the perjury trial as well as from interviews with the jurors.

1993 *Reckless Kelly* directed by Yahoo Serious. Adapted from the legend of Ned Kelly.

1993 *The Wide Sargasso Sea* directed by John Duigan. Adapted from the 1966 novel of the same name by Jean Rhys. An adaptation/prequel to Charlotte Bronte's 1847 *Jane Eyre.*

1993 *The Silver Brumby* directed by John Tatoulis. Adapted from the 1958 Elyne Mitchell YA novel, *The Silver Brumby.*

1994 *Country Life* directed by Michael Blakemore. Adapted from *Uncle Vanya* by Anton Chekhov.

1994 *Hammers Over the Anvil* directed by Ann Turner. Adapted from the 1975 collection of short stories of the same name by Alan Marshall.

1994 *Heartbreak High.* An Australian television drama series produced by Ben Gannon and Michael Jenkins. Adapted from the stage play of the same name by Richard Barrett as well as its film adaptation.

1994 *Mary* directed by Kay Pavlou. Adapted from the life experiences of Australia's first canonised saint, Mary MacKillop.

1994 *Muriel's Wedding* written by Amanda Midlam and published by Penguin Books. Adapted from the feature of the same name, directed by P. J. Hogan in 1994. According to O' Regan, "the film updated a tradition of Australian storytelling centring on the antics of a daggy family featuring strong father/strong daughter relations and mentally defective siblings –the archetypal Rudd family story retold this time in a coastal city and contemporary context."

1994 *The Battlers.* An Australian miniseries directed by George Ogilvie set in the Great Depression. Adapted from the 1941 novel of the same name by Kylie Tennant.

1994 *That Eye, The Sky* directed by John Ruane. Adapted from *That Eye, The Sky, a* Tim Winton novel (1986).

1994 *Everynight ... Everynight*, directed by Alkinos Tsilimidos. Adapted from the Ray Mooney play of the same name.

1994 *Hotel Sorrento* directed by Richard Franklin. Adapted from *Hotel Sorento,* a play by Hannie Rayson (1990).

1994 *No Worries* directed by David Elfick. Adapted from the David Holman children's play, *No Worries.*

1994 *Traps* directed by Pauline Chan. Adapted from the novel, *Dreamhouse* by Kate Grenville (1986).

1994 *The Sum of Us* directed by Kevin Dowling. Adapted from the 1990 David Stevens play of the same name. This adaptation is the first in Australian cinema to feature homosexual characters in leading roles. Winner of Best Screenplay at the Montréal World Film Festival, Best Film at the Cleveland International Film Festival and Best Screenplay, Adapted at the AFI awards.

1995 *Dad and Dave: On Our Selection* directed by George Whaley. Adapted from the Ken G. Hall film of the same name (1932). The film stars Dame Joan Sutherland.

1995 *Sanctuary* directed by David de Crespigny. Adapted from David Williamson's play of the same name (1994).

1995 *Babe* directed by Chris Noonan. Adapted from the 1983 children's book, *The Sheep-Dog* by English writer Dick King-Smith. A sequel, *Babe: Pig in the City*, directed by George Miller, was not commercially successful and ended the shortly-lived franchise.

1996 *Cosi* directed by Mark Joffe. Adapted from the successful 1975 play of the same name by Louis Nowra.

1996 *Dead Heart* directed by Nick Parsons. Adapted from his play (1993) of the same name.

1996 *Blackrock* directed by Steven Vidler. Adapted from the play by Nick Enright (1995) which was, in turn, adapted from his play for younger audiences, *Property of the Clan*.

1996 *Mr Reliable* directed by Nadia Tass. Adapted from the real-life stories of Walter Mellish as reported in various Australian newspapers.

1996 *Romeo + Juliet*, directed by Baz Luhrmann. Adapted from the classic tragedy by William Shakespeare.

1996 *Brilliant Lies* directed by Richard Franklin. Adapted from yet another play by David Williamson (1993).

1996 *Life* directed by Lawrence Johnston. Adapted from *Containment*, a play by John Brumpton (1991).

1996 *Lilian's Story* directed by Jerzy Domaradzki. Adapted from Kate Grenville's novel of the same name (1985).

1996 *What I Have Written* directed by John Hughes. Adapted from the novel of the same name by John Scott (1994).

1996 *Whipping Boy* is a TV film directed by Di Drew. Adapted from the novel of the same name by Gabrielle Lord (1992).

1997 "Something Wicked" is an episode of the TV series *Murder Call* (Season 1), created by Hal McElroy and Jennifer Rowe. Adapted from the novel *Something Wicked* by Jennifer Rowe (1989).

1997 *Love in Ambush* directed by Carl Schultz. Adapted from the 1980 French novel *Jarai* by Loup Durand. The multilingual writer and screenwriter is often credited as Louis-André Durand and often wrote under different pseudonyms including HL Dugall, Henri Galissian, Michael Borgia and Pierre Rey.

1997 *Oscar and Lucinda* directed by Gillian Armstrong. Adapted from Peter Carey's Booker-Prize winning novel of the same name (1988). Armstrong's film is one of the most expensive ones made in Australia and for many commentators its box office failure signalled the end of Australia's fascination and predilection for Colonial costume dramas. Cate Blanchett's performance, however, mesmerised the English director, Shekhar Kapur, who immediately cast her in *Elizabeth*.

1997 *Paradise Road* directed by Bruce Beresford. Adapted from the Betty Jeffrey memoir, *White Coolies* (1950). Chronicling the experiences of a group of, mainly, Western white women as prisoners of the Japanese war in Sumatra during WWII.

1997 *The Well* directed by Samantha Lang. Adapted from the Elizabeth Jolley literary novel of the same name (1986).

1998 *The Boys* directed by Rowan Woods. Adapted from the play of the same name by Gordon Graham (1991). The play was inspired by the real-life brutal slaying of nurse Anita Cobby in Western Sydney.

1998 *The Sound of One Hand Clapping* directed by Richard Flanagan. Adapted by the writer from his award-winning 1997 novel of the same name.

1998 "Deadline", an episode of the TV series *Murder Call* (Season 2), created by Hal McElroy and Jennifer Rowe. Adapted from the novel *Deadline* by Jennifer Rowe (1988).

1998 *Never Tell Me Never* is directed by David Elfick. Adapted from the book by the same name by Janine Shepherd, AM.

1998 *The Violent Earth* directed by Michael Offer has been adapted by Graeme Farmer based on the novel by Jacqueline Senes of the same name.

1998 *Welcome to Woop Woop* directed by Stephan Elliot. Adapted from the 1994 novel, *The Dead Heart*, by American writer Douglas Kennedy.

1998 *Aftershocks*, a TV Drama directed by Geoff Burton. Adapted from Paul Brown's 1993 play, *Aftershocks* which was, in turn, inspired by the Newcastle earthquake.

1998 *In the Winter Dark* directed by James Bogle. Adapted from the 1998 novel of the same name by Tim Winton.

1998 *Kings in Grass Castles* directed by John Woods. Adapted from the 1959 novel of the same name by Dame Mary Durack.

1998 *The Sugar Factory* directed by Robert Carter. Adapted from his 1996 novel of the same name.

1998 *Head On* directed by Ana Kokkinos. Adapted from *Loaded,* a 1995 novel by Christos Tsiolkas. The adaptation has generated wide critical commentary particularly in regards to its postmodern aesthetic and its contribution to Queer Studies. Winner of various awards including the Awgie Award for Feature Film – Adaptation at the Australian Writers' Guild 1998 awards.

1998 *Praise* directed by John Curran. Adapted from the 1992 'grunge' novel of the same name by Andrew McGann.

1999 *Looking for Alibrandi* directed by Kate Woods. Adapted from the Melina Marchetta YA novel, *Looking for Alibrandi* (1990). The popular young adult novel has been taught in high schools in Australia widely since its publication. Winner of 5 AFI awards including Best Film and Best Screenplay Adapted from Another Source.

1999 *Molokai: The Story of Father Damien* directed by Paul Cox. Adapted from the nonfiction book, *Molokai: The Story of Father Damien* by Hilde Eynikel (1999).

1999 *Queen Kate, Carmel & St Jude*, a TV miniseries directed by Moira Moss. Adapted from *Queen Kate, Carmel & St Jude Get a Life*, a YA novel by Maureen McCarthy (1995).

1999 *Radiance* directed by Rachel Perkins. Adapted from the play *Radiance by* Louis Nowra (1993).

2000 *The Wog Boy* directed by Aleksi Vellis. Written and produced by Nick Giannopoulos. Adapted from characters from the comedy stage show, *Wogs out of Work*.

2000 *Chopper* directed by Andrew Dominik. Adapted from a series of autobiographical books by Mark 'Chopper' Read (1991-9). Eric Bana's AFI-winning performance as the titular character was responsible for his international acting career.

2000 *On the Beach* a TV film directed by Russell Mulcahy. Adapted from the 1957 dystopic novel of the same name by Nevil Shute.

2000 *The Magic Pudding*, an animated film directed by Karl Zwicky. Adapted from *The Magic* Pudding, the children's book Norman Lindsay (1918).

2000 *The Monkey's Mask* directed by Samantha Lang. Adapted from the verse novel *The Monkey's Mask by* Dorothy Potter (1994).

2000 *The Potato Factory* a TV miniseries directed by Robert Marchand. Adapted from the best-selling Bryce Courtney novel*, The Potato Factory* (1995).

2000 *Bootmen* is an Australian comedy-drama film directed by Dein Perry. It has been released in some international markets as *Tap Dogs*. Adapted from characters and stories from the stage shows, *Tap Dogs* (1996) and *Steel City* (1998).

2001 *One Night, the Moon* directed by Rachel Perkins. Adapted from the documentary *Black Tracker* directed by Michael Riley in 1997. The focus of the documentary was the story of Michael Riley's grandfather, Alexander Riley who was a well-known Aboriginal tracker.

2001 *He Died with a Falafel in His Hand* directed by Richard Lownstein. Adapted from the John Birmingham episodic novel of the same name (1994).

2001 *Lantana* directed by Ray Lawrence. Adapted from *Speaking in Tongues,* an Andrew Bovell play (1997).

2001 *Effie: Just Quietly – Make-Ups and Makeovers*. A magazine-style documentary series featuring the character of Effie (played by Mary Coustas) who was featured in the sitcom *Acropolis Now* (1989-92).

2001 *My Husband My Killer* directed by Peter Andrikidis. Adapted from the true-crime book of the same name by Lindsay Simpson and Sandra Harvey.

2001 *Black Chicks Talking*, a documentary film directed by Brandan Fletcher and Leah Purcell partly adapted from the latter's play, *Box the Pony*. The short documentary film was adapted into a book, published by Hodder Headline in 2002 and later adapted into a stage play.

2001 *My Brother Jack* is a TV miniseries directed by Ken Cameron. Adapted from the George Johnstone novel, *My Brother Jack* (1964). The novel won the Miles Franklin Award in 1964.

2001 *Silent Partner* directed by Alkinos Tsilimidos. Adapted from the Daniel Keene play of the same night.

2001 *Charlotte Gray* directed by Gillian Armstrong. Adapted from the 1999 novel of the same name by Sebastian Faulks.

2002 *Rabbit-Proof Fence* directed by Phillip Noyce. Adapted from the memoir *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence* by Doris Pilkington Garimara (1996).

2002 *Blurred* directed by Evan Clarry has been adapted from the play for young adults of the same name by Stephen Davis.

2002 *Kath and Kim*. An Australian sitcom adapted from characters in the television comedy shows, *Big Girls Blouse* (1994-95) and *Something Stupid* (1998).

2002 *Secret Bridesmaids' Business* directed by Lynne-Maree Lanzey. Adapted from the 1993 play, *Secret Bridesmaids' Business* by Elizabeth Coleman.

2002 *The Road from Coorain* is a television film directed by Brendan Maher. Adapted from the 1990 Jill Kerr Conway memoir, *The Road from Coorain.*

2002 *Australian Rules* directed by Paul Goldman. Adapted from the Phillip Gwynne YA novels *Deadly, Unna?* (1998) and its sequel, *Nukkin Ya* (2000). The film incited controversy over its depiction of Aboriginal Australian characters, (which hurt its performance at the box office) whereas as the novel did not. Despite this the film has won several prizes including the AFI for Best Screenplay Adapted from Another Source. The light-hearted world of the novels, aimed at younger readers, has been transformed into a stark and brutal one in the film adaptation.

2003 *Fat Pizza* a feature film directed by Paul Fenech. Adapted from stories and characters from the black comedy *Pizza* television series which screened on SBS between 2000-2007.

2003 *Greeks on the Roof*. An Australian television talk show. Adapted in part from the British talkshow *The Kumars at No. 42* and the character of Effie, played by Mary Coustas, who was featured in the sitcom *Acropolis Now (*1989-92).

2003 *Swimming Upstream* directed by Russell Mulcahy. Adapted from the Tony Fingleton autobiography, *Swimming Upstream* (1990).

2003 *Ned Kelly* directed by Gregor Jordan. Adapted from *Our Sunshine,* a novel by Robert Drewe (1991). The film only managed to return a third of its 30-million-dollar budget.

2003 *Teesh And Trude* directed by Melanie Rodriga. Adapted from the play, *Teesh and Trude by* Wilson McCaskill.

2003 *The Rage in Placid Lake* directed by Tony McNamara. Adapted from his play, *The Cafe Latte Kid* (1995).

2003 *The Shark Net*, a TV series directed by Graeme Burfoot. Adapted from Robert Drew's 2000 memoir, *The Shark Net*.

2004 *Jessica*. Miniseries directed by Peter Andrikidis. Adapted from the 1998 historical novel, *Jessica*, by Bryce Courtney.

2004 *The Brush Off* directed by Sam Neill. Adapted from the novel of the same name by Shane Maloney, 1996.

2004 *Through My Eyes,* a TV miniseries directed by Di Drew. Adapted from *Through My Eyes,* a memoir by Lindy Chamberlain-Creighton (2000).

2005 *Three Dollars* directed by Robert Connolly. Adapted from the literary novel *Three Dollars,* written by Elliot Pearlman in 1998.

2005 *Wolf Creek* directed by David McLean. Adapted from the real-life events of serial killer Ivan Milat as well as the disappearance of British backpacker Peter Falconio. A sequel, *Wolf Creek 2,* also directed by David McLean, was released in 2014.

2005 *Hating Alison Ashley* directed by Geoff Bennett. Adapted from the YA novel of the same name by Robin Klein (1984).

2005 *The Illustrated Family Doctor* directed by Kriv Stenders. Adapted from the David Snell novel of the same name (1997).

2005 *The Widower* directed by Lyndon Terracini. Adapted from "The Widower in the Country" and other poems by Les Murray.

2006 *Candy* directed by Neil Armfield. Adapted from *Candy: A Novel of Love and Addiction*, by Luke Davies (1997).

2006 *Answered by Fire* directed by Jessica Hobbs. Adapted from the history book by David Savage, *Dancing with the Devil: A personal Account of Policing the East Timor Vote for Independence*, 2002.

2006 *Happy Feet*. Animated film directed by George Miller. Adapted from BBC-type of documentaries such as *Life in the Freezer*. Since its release the film has become the source

material for a sequel, *Happy Feet Two* (released in 2011) and a video game based on the film was developed by A2M and published by Midway Games. Winner of an Academy Award for Best Animated Feature Film of the Year

2006 *Macbeth* directed by Geoffrey Wright. Adapted from William Shakespeare's tragedy.

2006 *Jindabyne* directed by Ray Lawrence. Adapted and 'indigenised' from the short story, "So Much Water, So Close to Home" by Raymond Carver (US) (1981).

2006 *Last Train to Freo* directed by Jeremy Simms. Adapted from the play, *The Return* by Reg Cribb (2001).

2006 *The Book of Revelation* directed by Ana Kokkinos. Adapted from the British novel, *The Book of Revelation* by Rupert Thomson (1999).

2006 *Deadly* directed by David Evans. A children's television series adapted from the best-selling book series by Morris Gleitzman and Paul Jennings.

2006 *48 Shades* directed by Daniel Lapaine. Adapted from the YA novel *48 Shades of* Brown by Nick Earls (2004).

2007 *Romulus, My Father* directed by Richard Roxburgh. Adapted from a portion of the memoir of the same name by Raymond Gaita (1999).

2007 *Bastard Boys* a miniseries directed by Ray Quint. Adapted by the 2002 nonfictional text, *Waterfront, the Battle that Changed Australia by* Helen Trinca and Anne Davies.

2007 *Lockie Leonard*. An Australian children's television series that has been adapted from the *Lockie Leonard* books by Tim Winton. Directed by Tony Tilse, James Bogle, Peter Templeman and Roger Hodgman.

2007 *Summer Heights High* is an Australian television mockumentary series directed by Stuart McDonald and written by and starring Chris Lilley. Adapted from characters in the 2005 mockumentary, *We Can Be Heroes: Finding the Australian of the Year.*

2007 *All My Friends Are Leaving Brisbane* directed by Louise Alston. Adapted from the play of the same name by Steven Vagg in 2005. The film has since been adapted by the director, Louise Alston, into a stage play, *All My Friends Are Leaving Adelaide* in 2012.

2007 *The Home Song Stories* directed by Tony Ayres. Adapted from his 2002 novel of the same name.

2007 *Unfinished Sky* directed by Peter Duncan. Adapted from the film, *De Poolse Bruid,* directed by Karim Traida (1998).

2007 *Animalia*. An Australian children's television series directed by David Scot. Adapted from the 1986 picture book of the same name by Graeme Base.

2007 *Wilfred*. An Australian comedy television series created by Adam Zwar and Jason Gann. Adapted from their award-winning 2002 short film of the same name.

2007 *December Boys* directed by Michael Noonan. Adapted from the 1963 novel, *December Boys* by Rod Hardy.

2008 *Disgrace* directed by Steve Jacobs. Adapted from the Booker winning-novel by J. M. Coetzee who has been living in Australia since 2002.

2008 *Australia* directed by Baz Luhrmann. Adapted from various sources including the Australian classic film, *The Overlanders*, directed by Harry Watt (1946) and the poems "The Ballad of the Drover", and "The Never-Never Country" by Henry Lawson. Both Watt's film and *Australia* are set in the North of the country, against the background of an impending invasion of the Japanese, both feature a prolonged cattle drive and both texts feature a romance. Other sources that were influential in shaping the narrative of the film include, by the director's admission, the novels of Xavier Herbett, *Poor Fellow My Country* and *Capricornia*. The film also plays homage to several seminal Australian films including *Jedda*, *Gallipoli*, *We of the Never Never* and *The Rabbit-Proof Fence*.

2008 *The Last Confession of Alexander Pearce* directed by Michael James Rowland. Adapted from archival confessions and testimonies by Alexander Pearce in 1824, shortly before

his hanging.

2008 The *Underbelly* TV series, created by Des Monaghan and Jo Horsburg. Adapted from *Leadbelly*: *Inside Australia's Underworld*, written by John Silvester and Andrew Rule in 2004.

2009 *Balibo* directed by Robert Connelly. Adapted from the nonfictional work, *Cover-Up: The Inside Story of the Balibo Five* by Jill Jolliffe (2002). The latter revised her work as *Balibo* in 2009 coinciding with the release of the film adaptation.

2009 *The Boys are Back* directed by Scott Hicks. Adapted from the memoir *The Boys are Back in Town* by Simon Carr (2009).

2009 *Beautiful Kate* directed by Rachel Ward. Adapted from *Beautiful Kate,* a novel by Newtown Thornburg (1982/USA).

2009 *Blessed* directed by Ana Kokkinos. Adapted from the play, *Who's Afraid of the Working Class,* co-written by Andrew Bovell, Melissa Reeves, Patricia Cornelius and Christos Tsiolkas.

2009 *Closed for Winter* directed by James Bogle. Adapted from the Georgia Blain novel of the same name (2006).

2009 *Last Ride* directed by Glendyn Ivin. Adapted from *The Last Ride,* a 2006 novel by Denise Young.

2009 *Mao's Last Dancer* directed by Bruce Beresford. Adapted from the 2003 autobiography, *Mao's Last* Dancer by Li Cunxin. The Beresford film only recounts events from Cunxin's life before he migrated to Australia and married the Australian dancer, Mary McKendry.

2009 *Van Diemen's Land* directed by Jonathan auf der Heide. Adapted from archival confessions and testimonies by Alexander Pearce in 1824, shortly before his hanging.

2009 *Bright Star* directed and written by Jane Campion is a British/Australian co-production which has been adapted from *Keats: A Biography* (1997) by Andrew Motion.

2010 *Animal Kingdom* directed by David Michôd. The film is an adaptation of Melbourne's 1988 'Walsh Street Murders', despite the director's protestations that he did not want to represent any direct parallels to real figures. The real-life events at the core of the film's narrative which are recounted in Tom Noble's 2000 nonfictional book *Untold Violence: Crime in Melbourne Today* which can be viewed as a hypertext for Michod's critical and financial success. The film also contains echoes of *Underbelly* and Francis Ford Coppola's *The Godfather*. The 2011 book, *Walsh Street* by Tom Noble has been influenced by the film's representation of the same events. The film was remade into a television movie in the US in 2016, starring Ellen Barking and directed by John Wells.

2010 *Tomorrow When the War Began* directed by Stuart Beattie. Adapted from *Tomorrow When the War Began*, a YA novel by John Marsden (1993). Marsden's classic text has also been adapted into a six-part drama series in 2016, directed by Brendan Maher.

2010 *Cloudstreet*. A TV mini-series commissioned by Showcase, directed by Matthew Saville and scripted by Ellen Fontana and Tim Winton. Adapted by the latter's 1991 novel of the same name. Previously, the novel was adapted into a successful stage play by Nick Enright and Justin Monjo. The novel was released in 1991 and since then, it has gained the reputation of Australia's most loved literary work, as voted by the viewers of the ABC's *First Tuesday Book Club* which initiated a competition to celebrate the 2012 National Year of Reading.

2010 *Don Parties On*, written by David Williamson and directed for the stage by Robyn Nevin for the *STC*, is published by Currency Press. Adapted from both the 1971 play by David Williamson, *Don's Party*, and the 1976 film directed by Bruce Beresford of the same name.

2010 *Oranges and Sunshine* a British-Australian drama film co-production directed by Jim Loach. Adapted from the memoir *Empty Cradles* by Margaret Humphreys.

2010 *Bran Nue Day* directed by Rachel Perkins. Adapted from the 1990 musical *Bran Nue Day* by Jimmy Chi.

2010 *The Tree* directed by Julie Bertuccelli. Adapted from the 2002 novel by Judy Pascoe, *Our Father who Art in the Tree*. Since the release of the film, newer editions of the novel have been released with the title, *The Tree*.

2011 *Beaconsfield*, directed by Glendyn Ivin, tells of the two Tasmanian miners, Todd Russell and Brant Webb, who were trapped in a mine in Beaconsfield for 14 days. Their plight was watched live throughout Australia and Judi McCrossin used these broadcasts as a source for her television adaptation of this real historical event.

2011 *Red Dog* directed by Kriv Stenders. Adapted from the nonfiction animal memoir *Red Dog* for young adults by Louis de Bernières (2002). *Red Dog* holds the record for selling more DVD copies than any other Australian film. Winner of the Samsung AACTA Award for Best Film.

2011 *Snowtown* directed by Justin Kurzel. Adapted from the nonfiction book, *Killing for Pleasure* by Debi Marshall (2011). Released abroad as *The Snowtown Murders*. Winner of 2007 Ned Kelly Awards for Best True Crime.

2011 *The Tall Man*, a documentary film directed by Tony Krawitz. Adapted from the nonfiction expose *The Tall Man by* Chloe Hooper (2009).

2011 *The Hunter* directed by Daniel Nettheim investigates the survival of Tasmania's last thylacine. Adapted from the 1999 novel *The Hunter* by Julia Leigh.

2011 *The Slap* is a TV eight-part mini-series directed by Tony Ayres, Robert Connolly, Jessica Hobbs and Matt Saville. Adapted from the 2008 award-winning novel of the same name by Christos Tsiolkas. *The Slap* was remade into an American television drama in 2015.

2011 *The Cup* was directed by Simon Wincer and written by Eric O'Keefe and Simon Wincer. Adapted from events relating to the 2002 Melbourne Cup.

2011 *The Eye of the Storm* directed by Fred Schepisi. Adapted from the Patrick White novel of the same name (1973). White still remains the only Australian to win a Nobel Prize for Literature. The film has won 3 AACTA awards.

2011 *Angry Boys* is an Australian television mockumentary series directed by Chris Lilley, Stuart McDonald, Anthony Rose and Jeffrey Walker. Written by and starring Chris Lilley. Adapted from characters in the 2005 mockumentary, *We Can Be Heroes: Finding the Australian of the Year*.

2012 *Devil's Dust* is TV series directed by Jessica Hobbs. Adapted from the 2009 nonfiction account *Killer Company: James Hardie Exposed* by Matt Peacock. Whilst the source material is meticulously researched the adaptation presents the lead character of Bernie Banton as an archetypal larrikin Australian 'David' fighting the 'Goliath' of capitalist greed and class.

2012 *Mabo*, a TV film directed by Rachel Perkins about one of Australia's most reknown citizens whose struggle for recognition of Indigenous rights led to the historic Mabo decision. Adapted from her SBS-commissioned documentary series, *First Australians*. Sue Smith, the writer, also acknowledges that she was influenced by aspects of the nonfictional book, *Edward Koiki Mabo: His Life and Struggle for Land Rights* by Noel Loos. Further material for the film has been provided by the Mabo family.

2012 *Kath & Kimderella*. Directed by Ted Emery and adapted from the Australian sitcom, *Kath and Kim* featuring characters created by Gina Riley, Jane Turner and Magda Szubanski.

2012 *Lore* directed by Cate Shortland. Adapted from British writer Rachel Seiffert's collection of post-WWII tales, *The Dark Room* (2001).

2012 *Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries* produced by Deb Cox and Fiona Eagge. Adapted by crime fiction novels by Kerry Greenwood including *Cocaine Blues, Murder on the Ballarat Train The Green Mill Murder, Death at Victoria Dock, Raisins and Almonds, Ruddy Gore, Murder in Montparnasse, Away with the Fairies, Queen of the Flowers, Blood and Circuses* and *Murder in the*

Dark.

2012 *Puberty Blues*, a TV miniseries created by Imogen Banks, John Edwards. Adapted from the 1979 novel, *Puberty Blues* by Gabrielle Carey and Kathy Lette. The newer text went beyond the nostalgic mode for a bygone era and inserted an enlightened contextual examination of societal values, attitudes and mores against the background of a female coming-of-age narrative.

2012 *Gallipoli from Above*, a documentary film shown on Foxtel directed by Wain Fimeri, narrated by Hugh Dolan. Adapted from his book, *36 Days: The Untold Story Behind the Gallipoli Landings*.

2012 *Jack Irish*: *Bad Debts* and *Black Tide*. A TV series directed by Jeffrey Walker. Adapted from the popular Jack Irish novels, *Bad Debts* and *Black Tide* written by Peter Temple in 1996 and 1999 respectively.

2012 *The Sapphires* directed by Wayne Blair. Recounts a pivotal time in the life of a group of young Aboriginal women from the outback who travel to Vietnam to entertain the American troops. Adapted from the Helpman-winning 2004 Tony Briggs play of the same name that also uses the real-life experiences of his mother and aunt as its basis. Winner of 11 AACTA awards including Best Film and Best Adapted Screenplay.

2012 *Underground: The Julian Assange Story* is a TV film that was also released at the cinemas directed by Robert Connolly. Adapted from the nonfictional account, *Underground: Tales of Hacking* by Suelette Dreyfus (1997).

2012 *Dead Europe* directed by Tony Krawitz. Adapted from the 2005 novel of the same name by Christos Tsolkias.

2012 *I Will Survive* a reality TV/talent show for Network 10 produced by Fremantle Media. Adapted from the feature film, *Priscilla The Queen of the Desert* directed by Stephan Elliot in 1995.

2013 *Patrick* directed by Mark Hartley. Adapted from the 1978 horror film of the same

name, directed by Richard Franklin.

2013 *An Accidental Soldier*. A TV film directed by Rachel Ward. Adapted from the 2007 novel, *Silent Parts* by George Haralambous.

2013 *Please Like Me* is a television series screened on ABC TV, written by Josh Thomas and directed by Matthew Saville. Adapted from Thomas's 2007 Melbourne International Comedy Festival solo stand-up show, *Please Like Me*.

2013 *Tracks* directed by John Curran. Adapted from Robyn Davidson's best-selling memoir, *Tracks* (1997). The Curran film tracing one woman's courageous trek in the Australian desert remains truthful to the spirit of the original source material whilst adding a more contemporary representation of individuality.

2013 *Adore*, also known as *Adoration, Two Mothers*, and *Perfect Mothers* is directed by Christopher Hampton. Adapted from a 2003 short novel by Doris Lessing, *The Grandmothers*.

2013 *Child Lost on Goolumbulla* is a short film produced by Andrew Furphy and John Derum. Adapted by one of the many narrative strands of Joseph Furphy's 1890's epic *Such is Life*.

2013 *Cronulla Riots: The Day that Shocked the Nation* is directed by Jaya Balendra for SBS television. A documentary adapted from various/media reports of the 'Cronulla Race riots' 2005.

2013 *Drift* directed by Morgan O'Neill and Ben Nott. Adapted from an original unpublished story by Morgan O' Neill and Tim Duffy.

2013 *Goddess* directed by Mark Lamprell. Adapted from the musical *Sink Songs by* Joanna Weinberg (2012).

2013 *Ja'mie: Private School Girl*. Australian comedy series directed by Chris Lilley and Stuart McDonald. Adapted from the television mockumentary, *We Can Be Heroes: Finding the*

Australian of the Year, written and performed by Chris Lilley. This show is also known as *The Nominees* abroad.

2013 *The Turning* –a series of short films directed by Jonathan auf der Heide (*Fog*), Tony Ayres (*Cockleshell*), Cate Blanchett (*Reunion*), Jub Clerc (*Abbreviation*), Robert Connolly (*Aquifer*), Shaun Gladwell (*Family*), Rhys Graham (*Small Mercies*), Justin Kurzel, (*Boner McPharlin's Moll*), Yaron Lifschitz (*Immunity*), Anthony Lucas (*Damaged Goods*), Claire McCarthy (*The Turning*), Ian Meadows (*Defender*), Ashlee Page (*On Her Knees*), Stephen Page (*Sand*), Warwick Thornton (*Big World*), Marieka Walsh (*Ash Wednesday*) Mia Wasikowska (*Long, Clear View*) and David Wenham (*Commission*). Adapted from the 2005 short story anthology *The Turning* by Tim Winton.

2013 *Wentworth*. An Australian drama series directed by Kevin Carlin, Catherine Millar, Tori Garrett, Jet Wilkinson. Adapted from the Australian prison drama, *Prisoner* which ran for eight seasons 1979-1986. The latter is known in the USA as *Prisoner: Cell Block H*. The name change was necessitated from a legal action against the producers who claimed that the show was adapted in part from a British television drama entitled, *Within These Walls*.

2013 *The Railway Man* directed by Jonathan Teplitzky. Adapted from the 1995 autobiography, *The Railway Man by* Eric Lomax.

2014 *Old School,* an ABC miniseries directed by Gregor Jordan, Peter Templeman and Paul Oliver. Adapted from the 2004 short film short film *Lennie Cahill Shoots Through* directed by Paul Oliver.

2014 *Parer's War* directed by Alister Grierson. Adapted from the 2012 Neil McDonald biography, *Kokoda Front Line!* The book was first published in 1994 as *War Cameraman: The Story of Damien Parer* and was revised in 2004 as *Damien Parer's War*.

2014 *Anzac Girls,* an ABC television miniseries directed by Ken Cameron and Ian Watson. Adapted by the 2008 nonfiction book *The Other Anzacs*, written by Peter Rees.

2014 *Carlotta* is a television film directed by Samantha Lang starring Jessica Marais. Adapted from the 2003 biography *Carlotta* written by Carol Byron and Prue MacSween.

2014 *Devil's Playground* is a miniseries which was broadcast of FOXTEL and directed by Rachel Ward and Tony Krawitz. Adapted from the 1976 feature film *The Devil's Playground* directed by Fred Schepisi.

2014 *Fat Pizza Vs Housos* is an SBS comedy show directed by Paul Fenech. Adapted from his own work, *Fat Pizza,* which was screened on SBS in 2000.

2014 *Fat Tony & Co,* a television miniseries directed by Peter Andrikidis, Andrew Prowse, and Karl Zwicky. Adapted from the 2008 mini-series *Underbelly*, created by Des Monaghan and Jo Horsburg.

2014 *Jack Irish: Dead Point.* This is the third part in the *Jack Irish* detective novels to be adapted for ABC television. Like the two that preceded it, it was directed by Jeffrey Walker. Adapted from the 2000 novel, *Jack Irish: Dead Point* by Peter Temple.

2014 *Janet King,* starring Marta Dusseldorp as the eponymous character, is an eight-part drama series for ABC TV directed by Grant Brown, Peter Andrikidis, Ian Watson. Adapted from the 2011 ABC drama series *Crownies* produced by Jane Allen, Lisa Scott, and Karl Zwicky.

2014 *Jonah from Tonga* is a television comedy miniseries directed by Chris Lilley and Stuart McDonald. Adapted from the 2005 television show, *We Can Be Heroes: Finding the Australian of the Year*, written and directed by Chris Lilley.

2014 *Love Child* is an eight-part drama series broadcast on the Nine Network directed by Shawn Seet, Shirley Barrett, Geoff Bennett, and Ian Barrye. Adapted from real life events involving forced adoption in Australia.

2014 *Monkey Grip - Story of a Novel* is a documentary feature screened on the ABC and directed by Fiona Tuomy. It examines the novel's "impact on Australia's artistic, political and cultural identity". Adapted from the 1977novel *Monkey Grip* by Helen

Garner.

2014 *Predestination* is a science-fiction feature film directed by the Spierig Brothers (Michael and Peter). Adapted from the 1959 short story, "All You Zombies" by the renowned science-fiction author, Robert A. Heinlein.

2014 *Tashi* is a TV series produced by Serg Delfino and Marc Wasik. Adapted from the *Tashi* series of children by Barbara Fienberg, Anna Fienberg and Kim Gamble, first published in 1995.

2014 *The Broken Shore* is a television feature film directed by Rowan Woods for the ABC. Adapted from the 2005 Peter Temple novel, *The Broken Shore*.

2014 *The Moodys,* a comedy television show directed by Trent O'Donnell and Scott Pickett. Adapted from the 2012 television show, *A Moody* Xmas directed by Trent O'Donnell.

2014 *Turkey Shoot* is a feature film directed by Jon Hewitt. A remake of 1982 Brian Trenchard-Smith film of the same name. Notably, Carmen Duncan who played the vicious lesbian Jennifer in the original version of *Turkey Shoot* returns to play the President of the United States of America.

2015 *Between A Frock and A Hard Place*, a documentary directed by Paul Clarke and Alex Barry examining the genesis/adaptation of *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*. Winner of the AFI Best Documentary Television Program.

2015 *Gallipoli*, an eight-part drama series screened on the Nine/WIN Network is directed by Glendyn Ivin. Adapted from the 1998 nonfiction volume *Gallipoli* by Les Carlyon.

2015 *Holding The Man* directed by Neil Armfield. Adapted from the 1995 memoir of the same name by Timothy Conigrave. The stage adaptation of the memoir, also called *Holding the Man* by Tommy Murphy in 2006 has also been used as a source for this adaptation.

2015 *Mad Max: Fury Road* directed by George Miller has been adapted from material in the

Mad Max franchise, directed by George Miller.

2015 *Ruben Guthrie*, directed by Brendan Cowell. Adapted from his 2010 play of the same name.

2015 *Peter Allen: Not the Boy Next Door* is a television drama series directed by Shawn Seet. Adapted from various sources including the 1998 musical *The Boy from Oz* by Peter Allen and Nick Enright.

2015 *Macbeth* directed by Justin Kurzel, starring Michael Fassbinder. Adapted from Shakespeare's 1611 classic tragedy of the same name. Kurzel's film is the 25th major adaptation of the classic tragedy.

2015 *Catching Milat* is a television miniseries, screen by the Ten Network in 2015 which was directed by Peter Andrikidis. Adapted from the 1998 nonfiction book, *Sins of the Brother* by Mark Whittaker and Les Kennedy.

2015 *Crime & Punishment* directed by Andrew O' Keefe is the latest adaptation of the 1866 novel by Fyodor Dostoevsky.

2015 *Deadline Gallipoli* is a two-part television drama directed by Michael Rymer and written by Jacquelin Perske, Shaun Grant, Stuart Beattie and Cate Shortland. The text follows the experiences of journalists Charles Bean (Joel Jackson), Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett (Hugh Dancy), Keith Murdoch (Ewan Leslie) and photographer Phillip Schuler (Sam Worthington) during the Gallipoli campaign. Adapted from the journalistic records, historical events, the writing of the four journalists as well as their representation in other screen texts.

2015 *Force of Destiny* directed by Australian auteur Paul Cox. Adapted from his 2011 memoir, *Tales from the Cancer Ward.*

2015 *Paper Planes* directed by Robert Connolly. Adapted from the children's novel of the same name by Steve Worland.

2015 *The Beautiful Lie* produced by John Edwards and Imogen Banks. Adapted from the 1878 novel *Anna Karenina* by Leo Tolstoy.

2015 *The Blinky Bill Movie* directed by Deane Taylor. Adapted from the 1933 Children's book *Blinky Bill: The Quaint Little Australian* by Dorothy Wall.

2015 *The Dressmaker* directed by Jocelyn Moorehouse stars Kate Winslet and Judy Davis. Adapted from the 2000 novel *The Dressmaker* by Rosalie Ham.

2015 *The Secret River* miniseries directed by *Daina* Reid. Adapted from the 2005 award-winning novel *The Secret River* by Kate Grenville.

2015 *The Dream Children* was released in the US in April but has not had a release in Australia. Directed by Robert Chuter, scripted Angus Brown. Adapted from the play *Internet Baby* by the late Julia Britton.

2015 *Women He's Undressed*, a documentary feature directed by Gillian Armstrong. Adapted from the posthumously-published memoir, *Women I've Undressed* by Orry-Kelly.

2015 *Sucker* directed by Ben Chessell premiered in the 2015 Melbourne Film Festival. Adapted from the one-man show *Sucker*, written and performed by Lawrence Leung.

2015 *Last Cab to Darwin* directed by Jeremy Sims. Adapted from the 2003 play, *Last Cab to Darwin* by Reg Cribb.

Appendix 2

Top 100 Australian Feature Films of All Time.

The following films are all classified as Australian productions or productions with overseas partners where creative control is shared (i.e. with a mix of Australians in key creative positions). These films are ranked by total reported gross Australian box office as of May 2016. The budget for each film is in current dollars and had not been adjusted for inflation. Data related to reported gross Australian box office (not shown below) has been obtained from the *Motion Picture Distributors Association of Australia* (MPDAA) with the assistance of the *Australian Film Commission* and was initially compiled by *Screen Australia*.

I have obtained the budget for each film through various means, sometimes resorting to writing to the film distributors themselves. Data for the Australian and Worldwide gross earnings were obtained from diverse sources including *Box Office Mojo* and *The Numbers* and in 20% of cases directly from the film distributors. Both the Australian and the Worldwide reported gross box office have been adjusted by me, through Xcel spreadsheets, using the ticket price inflation information provided by *Australian Screen*. Industry sources I have consulted report that this method is a more preferable one, rather than using the inflation figures for each respective year.

This is an indicative list only because I have not included ancillary markets for these films which can include, amongst others, internet streaming services, airline streaming, television distribution, DVD sales, Pay Per View and VOD.

Asterisks in red denote films which have been adapted from other material. 72 of these top 100 films are adaptations which demonstrates the financial imperative behind the screen adaptation of previously published material. Film highlighted in 'buff' indicate content which has no immediate relevancy to the Australian context.

Worldwide Rank	AUS Rank	Title	Year	Budget $	Box Office Australia (adjusted for ticket inflation)	Box Office Worldwide (adjusted for ticket inflation)
1	1	*Crocodile Dundee**	1986	$8,800,000	$122,187,535	$823,515,885
4	2	*Babe**	1995	$30,000,000	$69,854,888	$472,301,255
2	3	*Crocodile Dundee II**	1988	$15,800,000	$55,552,221	$534,413,115
16	4	*The Man from Snowy River*	1982	$3,500,000	$46,860,595	$103,904,000
8	5	*Australia**	2008	$130,000,000	$45,725,899	$261,870,995
7	6	*Moulin Rouge**	2001	$52,000,000	$42,959,900	$277,576,310
27	7	*Strictly Ballroom**	1992	$3,000,000	$41,740,683	$55,088,608
3	8	*Happy Feet**	2006	$100,000,000	$41,686,772	$505,311,475
28	9	*Gallipoli**	1981	$2,800,000	$35,480,889	$51,982,222
12	10	*Mad Max 2**	1981	$2,000,000	$32,783,528	$151,111,111
24	11	*The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert**	1994	$2,000,000	$31,977,962	$58,285,714
15	12	*Muriel's Wedding**	1994	$3,000,000	$30,630,252	$111,714,286
26	13	*Young Einstein*	1988	$5,000,000	$29,838,349	$55,514,754
38	14	*The Dish*	2000	$5,000,000	$29,176,738	$29,015,495
6	15	*The Great Gatsby**	2013	$190,000,000	$27,767,957	$356,014,146
43	16	*Red Dog**	2011	$8,500,000	$22,685,680	$23,247,863
45	17	*Phar Lap**	1983	$5,000,000	$22,485,861	$22,585,714
17	18	*The Piano**	1993	$7,000,000	$21,838,655	$95,200,000
5	19	*Mad Max: Fury Road**	2015	$150,000,000	$21,685,344	$375,836,354
42	20	*Picnic at Hanging Rock**	1975	$500,000	$21,100,606	$24,727,273
23	21	*Green Card*	1991	$16,000,000	$20,714,972	$58,509,353
41	22	*The Dressmaker**	2015	$17,000,000	$20,011,313	$25,309,386
34	23	*Mad Max*	1979	$650,000	$19,685,044	$36,756,757
20	24	*Shine*	1996	$5,500,000	$19,046,399	$67,250,689

36	25	*Lantana**	2001	$5,000,000	$19,031,764	$31,444,191
50	26	*The Castle*	1997	$750,000	$18,800,458	$18,752,343
51	27	*The Wog Boy**	2000	$2,000,000	$18,559,865	$18,641,240
39	28	*Mao's Last Dancer**	2009	$25,000,000	$17,646,074	$28,571,429
31	29	*The Man from Snowy River II**	1988	$8,700,000	$16,531,803	$47,042,623
25	30	*Breaker Morant**	1980	$800,000	$16,099,000	$57,120,000
37	31	*The Water Diviner**	2014	$22,500,000	$15,837,842	$30,679,998
47	32	*The Sapphires**	2012	$10,000,000	$15,017,962	$21,178,626
53	33	*Looking for Alibrandi**	2000	$4,500,000	$13,422,236	$13,454,112
55	34	*The Man Who Sued God*	2001	$4,000,000	$13,238,883	$13,166,287
57	35	*Crackerjack*	2002	$3,500,000	$12,837,487	$12,810,515
32	36	*Lightning Jack*	1994	$15,000,000	$12,511,648	$38,876,571
29	37	*Crocodile Dundee in Los Angeles**	2001	$21,100,000	$12,018,656	$51,271,071
58	38	*Puberty Blues**	1981	$800,000	$11,841,067	$12,693,333
60	39	*Caddie**	1976	$400,000	$11,733,091	$12,363,636
10	40	*Happy Feet Two**	2011	$130,000,000	$11,301,544	$158,930,847
40	41	*Rabbit-Proof Fence**	2002	$6,000,000	$11,264,969	$26,514,786
54	42	*My Brilliant Career**	1979	$800,000	$11,218,162	$13,452,973
62	43	*Oddball*	2015	$4,000,000	$11,085,092	$11,085,092
61	44	*Storm Boy**	1976	$300,000	$10,900,606	$11,127,273
13	45	*Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome**	1985	$12,300,000	$10,761,131	$143,807,407
66	46	*Kenny*	2006	$900,000	$10,200,888	$10,229,508
65	47	*Chopper**	2000	$2,000,000	$9,583,411	$10,374,255
67	48	*Paper Planes**	2015	$6,000,000	$9,569,133	$9,644,890
56	49	*Two Hands*	1999	$4,400,000	$9,395,636	$12,862,547
69	50	*The Craic*	1999	$3,000,000	$9,031,112	$9,089,533
63	51	*Malcolm*	1986	$1,000,000	$8,921,034	$11,013,183

9	52	*Knowing (Australia/US)*	2009	$50,000,000	$8,672,185	$209,828,571
70	53	*Bran Nue Dae**	2010	$6,500,000	$8,519,626	$8,763,458
71	54	*We of the Never Never**	1982	$3,100,000	$8,464,640	$8,704,000
33	55	*Wolf Creek**	2005	$1,000,000	$8,319,494	$38,036,217
35	56	*The Year of Living Dangerously**	1982	$6,000,000	$7,860,800	$35,632,000
74	57	*Dirty Deeds*	2002	$3,000,000	$7,571,889	$7,596,933
21	58	*Dark City*	1988	$27,000,000	$7,481,496	$60,642,623
78	59	*Last Cab to Darwin**	2015	$4,000,000	$7,158,691	$7,234,876
79	60	*Strange Bedfellows*	2004	$3,000,000	$6,603,259	$6,580,645
68	61	*The Sum of Us**	1994	$3,400,000	$6,464,772	$9,520,000
44	62	*The Railway Man**	2013	$18,000,000	$6,361,756	$22,613,812
80	63	*Kath & Kimderella**	2012	$5,000,000	$6,313,555	$6,332,824
81	64	*Newsfront*	1978	$600,000	$6,123,886	$6,123,886
84	65	*Romper Stomper**	1992	$1,600,000	$6,071,151	$5,681,013
59	66	*Careful He Might Hear You**	1983	$2,200,000	$5,904,163	$12,465,017
30	67	*The Crocodile Hunter: Collision Course**	2002	$12,000,000	$5,797,644	$49,305,586
85	68	*Sunday Too Far Away**	1975	$300,000	$5,588,364	$5,646,061
75	69	*Animal Kingdom**	2010	$5,000,000	$5,546,513	$7,543,230
18	70	*Fortress**	1992	$12,000,000	$5,476,741	$80,447,577
52	71	*Kings of Mykonos/The Wog Boy 2**	2010	$5,000,000	$5,431,475	$15,862,969
48	72	*Sirens*	1994	$5,000,000	$5,402,384	$20,205,714
87	73	*Far East**	1982	$1,300,000	$5,363,840	$5,363,840
72	74	*Death in Brunswick**	1991	$2,000,000	$5,332,705	$8,414,388
11	75	*Legend of the Guardians: The Owls of Ga'Hoole**	2010	$80,000,000	$5,305,816	$155,412,724
88	76	*The Big Steal*	1990	$1,800,000	$5,242,974	$5,350,820
82	77	*Little Fish*	2005	$3,500,000	$5,240,062	$5,883,300
73	78	*The Heartbreak Kid**	1993	$3,000,000	$5,165,705	$7,771,429
64	79	*Fat Pizza**	2003	$400,000	$5,151,423	$11,004,149

46	8	*Dead Calm**	1989	$10,000,000	$5,036,960	$21,430,303
19	81	*Queen of the Damned**	2002	$35,000,000	$4,773,240	$67,776,561
91	82	*Ten Canoes*	2006	$2,200,000	$4,605,441	$4,852,459
77	83	*Charlie & Boots*	2009	$3,000,000	$4,419,226	$7,314,286
89	84	*The Hard Word*	2002	$2,000,000	$4,405,411	$5,273,612
83	85	*Me Myself I*	2000	$3,000,000	$4,373,932	$5,835,518
94	86	*Mental*	2012	$3,500,000	$4,279,458	$4,553,362
95	87	*Proof*	1991	$1,600,000	$4,234,508	$4,234,508
86	88	*Kokoda**	2006	$4,000,000	$4,116,067	$5,377,049
14	89	*Sanctum*	2011	$30,000,000	$4,091,584	$114,759,907
90	90	*Oranges and Sunshine**	2011	$4,500,000	$4,066,776	$4,860,917
93	91	*The Chant of Jimmy Blacksmith**	1978	$1,200,000	$3,967,314	$4,662,857
92	92	*Bootmen/Tap Dogs**	2005	$2,000,000	$3,721,942	$4,816,507
97	93	*Samson and Delilah*	2009	$1,600,000	$3,644,493	$3,644,493
96	94	*Fatty Fin**	1980	$350,000	$3,617,600	$3,740,000
49	95	*Bright Star* *	2009	$8,500,000	$3,554,926	$19,680,104
98	96	*Head On**	1998	$1,700,000	$3,090,869	$3,456,163
22	97	*Daybreakers*	2009	$20,000,000	$2,797,771	$58,754,286
100	98	*Housos Vs Authority**	2012	$200,000	$1,439,619	$1,439,619
99	99	*That Sugar Film*	2014	$457,770	$1,250,000	$1,525,221
76	100	*The Babadook*	2014	$2,000,000	$1,200,000	$7,500,000

Please note the following releases failed to recoup their budget at the time of their release in Australia and therefore could not be considered box office success, regardless of their box office receipts/earnings. Asterisks denote films which have been adapted from other material.

A Few Best Men	5,296,692	5.4 million
*Babe: Pig in the City**	7,771,751	90 million
Beneath Hill 60	3,220,187	9 million
*Boytown**	3,135,972	5 million
*Charlotte Gray**	4,188,497	14 million

*Evil Angels**	3,006,964	15 million
Japanese Story	4,520,000	5.75 million
*Jindabyne**	5,302,912	14 million
*Ned Kelly**	8,365,984	30 million
*Reckless Kelly**	5,444,534	20 million
*The Delinquents**	3,370,650	9 million
*Tomorrow, When the War Began**	16,500,000	27 million
*Wolf Creek 2**	4,732,168	7 million

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